

ULRR

Challenging Hate: Protecting Human Rights and Strengthening Democracy - Programme and Book of Abstracts

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Challenging Hate:

Protecting Human Rights
and Strengthening
Democracy

Programme and
Book of Abstracts

**SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

4 QUALITY
EDUCATION



5 GENDER
EQUALITY



8 DECENT WORK AND
ECONOMIC GROWTH



10 REDUCED
INEQUALITIES



11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES
AND COMMUNITIES



16 PEACE, JUSTICE
AND STRONG
INSTITUTIONS



17 PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS





Challenging Hate: Protecting Human Rights and Strengthening Democracy

Conference hosted by the European Centre for the Study of Hate in association with the Council of Europe Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion

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Challenging Hate: Protecting Human Rights and Strengthening Democracy

Conference hosted by the European Centre for the Study of Hate in association with the Council of Europe Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion

Conference Programme

Day 1 – 28 May 2026

Time	Details
9am	Registration, tea and coffee
9:30am– 9:35am	Welcome to the University of Limerick Professor Colin Fitzpatrick, Vice-President Global and Community Engagement, University of Limerick Professor Jennifer Schweppe, Director, European Centre for the Study of Hate
9:35am– 10:15am	Introductory Panel Speakers: Judge Úna Ní Raifeartaigh, Judge of the European Court of Human Rights Käthlin Sander, Chairperson, Council of Europe Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI) Dr Wolfram Bechtel, Head of the Standards and Intercultural Inclusion Division and Secretary of the Steering Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI) Moderator: Professor Jennifer Schweppe, European Centre for the Study of Hate
10:15am– 11:15am	Plenary Panel 1: Combating the Continuum of Hate. Speakers: Professor Barbara Perry, UNESCO Chair in Hate Studies, Ontario Tech University Dr Stephanie Öner [online], Chairperson, former Council of Europe Committee of Experts on Hate Crime

Time	Details
	Dr Ebun Joseph, Special Rapporteur on Racial Equality and Racism, Ireland Moderator: Charlotte Gilmartin, Head of the Gender Equality Policies Unit, Secretary to the Gender Equality Commission (GEC), Council of Europe Closing comment: Professor Shane Kilcommins, President of the University of Limerick
11:15am– 11:45am	Tea and coffee
11:45am– 1.15pm	Parallel Sessions – Green [click to see details] 1. Critically interrogating Strasbourg’s stance on criminalising hate speech and its approach to intermediary liability compared to the Digital Services Act - Roundtable 2. European understandings of hate 3. Gendered experiences of hate (1) 4. Preventing Hate (1) 5. Representations of hate 6. Hate and human rights
1.15pm– 2.15pm	Lunch
2.15pm– 3:45pm	Parallel Sessions – Blue [click to see details] 1. Identifying, Exposing and Transforming societal, institutional and policy responses to Hate Crime 2. Experiencing hate 3. The politics of hate 4. Preventing Hate (2) 5. Addressing hate online

Time	Details
3:45pm– 4:00pm	Tea and coffee
4:00pm– 5.15pm	Plenary Panel 2: Victims and Victims’ Rights Speakers: Professor Mark Walters, Honorary Professor, Sussex University Dr Klára Kalibová, Director, In Iusticia Dr Sindy Joyce, Lecturer in Traveller Studies, University of Limerick Marion Adam, Vice-Chair, former Council of Europe Committee of Experts on Hate Crime Moderator: Ambassador Caitríona Doyle, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the Council of Europe, Strasbourg
6:30pm– 7.30pm	Launches – Castletroy Park Hotel <i>De Gruyter European Handbook on Hate Crime</i> – to be launched by Professor Katie McBride, Co-Director of the International Network for Hate Studies <i>Simply Human: A Guide to Understanding and Combating Hate</i> – to be launched by Professor Barbara Perry, UNESCO Chair in Hate Studies, Ontario Tech University <i>Centre for the Study of Hate and Inequalities – SHINE</i> – to be launched by Dr Puneet Saidha, Director of Research, University of Limerick <i>Musical entertainment:</i> Traditional Irish Harp by Isla Vaughan Mitchell and Fiadh Nicholas
7.30pm	Conference dinner Castletroy Park Hotel

Day 2 – 29 May 2026

Time	Details
9am	Registration, tea and coffee
9:30am– 10:45am	Plenary Panel 3: Increasing trust and promoting inclusion Speakers: Nadejda Hriptievschi, former Council of Europe Committee of Experts on Combating Hate Speech Rachael Moore, ILGA Europe Ciarán O'Connor, Institute for Strategic Dialogue Professor Kehinde Andrews, Birmingham City University Moderator: Dr Wolfram Bechtel, Head of the Standards and Intercultural Inclusion Division and Secretary of the Steering Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI)
10:45am– 11:15am	Tea and coffee
11:15am– 12:45pm	Parallel Sessions - Purple [click to see details] 1. We own our own words: Tackling Hate Speech and Online Academic Incivility Through Educative Approaches - Roundtable 2. The Cure for Hate — Film Screening and Discussion Panel 3. Hate crime in the criminal justice system (1) 4. Gendered experiences of hate (2) 5. Communicating hate 6. Understanding hate online
12:45pm– 1:45pm	Lunch

Time	Details
1:45pm– 2:30pm	Plenary Panel 4: Growing up in an Inclusive Europe Speakers: Mariam Tartousi [Online], Bureau member of the Advisory Council on Youth (CCJ) of the Council of Europe, Member of <i>No Hate Speech Network</i> Robert Örell, Executive Director of TRANSFORM and Board President of Violence Prevention USA Aoife Lawlor, Katie O’Sullivan, and Nurjahan Islam, University of Limerick Moderator: Dr Viktor Kunderák, Vice Chair, Council of Europe Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI)
2:30pm– 4pm	<u>Parallel Sessions - Red</u> [click to see details] 1. Criminalisation of hate speech 2. Hate crime in the criminal justice system (2) 3. Understanding and addressing hate speech 4. Preventing Hate (3) 5. The continuum of hate
4pm– 5pm	Plenary Panel 5 – Challenging Hate Conference closing remarks Speakers: Dr Matteo Tracchi, Hate Speech and Hate Crime Unit, Council of Europe Käthlin Sander, Chairperson, Council of Europe Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI) Professor Jennifer Schweppe, University of Limerick Moderator: Charlotte Gilmartin, Head of the Gender Equality Policies Unit, Secretary to the Gender Equality Commission (GEC), Council of Europe
7pm	Conference BBQ, University Pavilion <i>Musical entertainment:</i> “Sessiún Ceol”

Challenging Hate: Protecting Human Rights and Strengthening Democracy

Conference hosted by the European Centre for the Study of Hate in association with the Council of Europe Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion

Parallel sessions

Day 1, 11:45am - 1.15pm Parallel Sessions 1: Green

1. Critically interrogating Strasbourg's stance on criminalising hate speech and its approach to intermediary liability compared to the Digital Services Act – Roundtable

Room: KBG10

Professor Gavin Phillipson, Dr Natalie Alkiviadou, Dr Eliza Bechtold

Moderator: Dr Luke Danagher, European Centre for the Study of Hate, University of Limerick

2. European understandings of hate

Room: KBG11

- i. Hate speech in European Law: Between the Council of Europe and the EU

Stevi Kitsou

- ii. The Legal Defence of Tolerance: How Article 2 TEU Can Confront State-Driven Intolerance in the EU

Dr Sara Benedi Lahuerta

- iii. Systemic Deficiencies Hindering the Effective Challenge of Hate Speech and Hate Crimes in Bulgaria

Dr Deyana Marcheva, Associate Professor, New Bulgarian University

Moderator: Professor Anca Minescu, European Centre for the Study of Hate, University of Limerick

Gendered experiences of hate (1)

Room: KGB13

i. Instrumentalizing Anti-LGBT Sentiment: The Impact of “LGBT-Free Zones” in Poland

Dr Ewa Milczarek

ii. Online Gender-Based Violence Against Female Journalists in Ethiopia: Patterns, Responses, and Implications

Dr Muluken Asegidew Chekol

iii. Transphobic hate crime & manifestations of hate speech: the murder of Cuban trans woman by Bangladeshi man in Greece

Dr Dimitra Filippou

iv. Gendered Hate in Digital Ecosystems: Evidence from the Italian Manosphere

Giovanna Vingelli

Moderator: Charlotte Gilmartin, Head of the Gender Equality Policies Unit, Secretary to the Gender Equality Commission (GEC), Council of Europe

4. Preventing Hate (1)

Room: KGB14

i. Building an Empathy Surplus in the European Union

Chuck Watts

ii. Hot and Cold: Can increasing cognitive flexibility decrease inter-group hatred?

Dr Arun Bokde, Dr Jan de Vries and Dr Simon McCarthy-Jones

iii. The Foundations of Modern Society: Reclaiming Universal Values through Education for Democratic Culture in the Real, Digital, and AI-Mediated World

Violeta Vlajkovic Bojic and Zlatko Grusanovic

Moderator: Natasha Walsh, European Centre for the Study of Hate, University of Limerick

5. Representations of hate

Room: KGB15

i. The Problem of Enduring Symbols of Hate

Robert Tynes

ii. Unmasking Code-Mixed Bengali Memes: A Hierarchical Multimodal Hate Detector Beyond the Surface

Suzad Mohammad, Md Saimul Haque Shanto, Md Samiur Rahman, Shamima Akter Eti,
Naeem Mia, and Sadia Sharmin

iii. When Inaction Hurts: Social Norms and the Public Meaning of Hate Speech

Dr Jimena Zapata and Dr Ana Isabel Leal Lobato

iv. Othered at First Sight: Lookism, Ableism, and the Aesthetics of Exclusion

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Moderator: Dr Yianna Liatsos, European Centre for the Study of Hate, University of Limerick

6. Hate and human rights

Room: KGB16

i. State-Driven Stigmatization as Hate Speech: Implications for European Human Rights
Law and Strategic Litigation

Professor Dr Hüseyin Demir

ii. “Are We Safe Here?” Migrant Women, Hate, and the Urgent Call for Action 25 Years After
Durban

Dr Salome Mbugua

iii. From Hate to Harmony: Formulating a pan-European approach to hate crime across the
European human rights framework?

Natalie Gunthel

Moderator: Dr Stefano Angeleri, European Centre for the Study of Hate University of
Limerick

Day 1, 2.15pm - 3.45pm Parallel Sessions 2: Blue



1. Identifying, Exposing and Transforming societal, institutional and policy

responses to Hate Crime: British Society of Criminology Hate Crime Network Panel

Room: KGB11

Dr Jane Healy, Der Ferhat Tura, Dr Amy Clarke, Emily Wertans, Professor Jon Garland, Alannah Graham, Dr Maria Sapouna, August Ramsay

2. Experiencing hate

Room: KGB10

i. Victim-centred, Comprehensive Approach to Hate Crime and Hate Speech: Recent Experience with Reflecting International Standards and Best Practices in Czechia

Dr Viktor Kunderák

ii. Racist Hate Crime in Football

Dr Leon Moosavi

iii. Breathing Hate: Affective Atmospheres and the Embodied Experience of Prejudice

Professor Katie McBride and Professor Zoë James

Moderator: Eoin Quill, School of Law, University of Limerick

3. The politics of hate

Room: KGB13

i. The impacts of harassment and hate on Sami politicians in Norway

Professor Tore Bjørgo, Mikkel Berg-Nordlie, and Benedicte Nordahl Berntsen

ii. Hate Speech and Minority Rights in Serbia: The Case of Minister Vulin

Ragmi Mustafi

iii. Genocide and hate crime: Exploring hate offending through an alternative lens

William Bergstroem

iv. Exonationalism – Imperialism Reborn: International influences on populist nationalism, The case of Ireland

Dr Lindsey Garratt

Moderator: Dr Nita Mishra, European Centre for the Study of Hate, University of Limerick

4. Preventing Hate (2)

Room: KGB14

i. Breaking the Loneliness-Hate Pipeline: Evidence-Based Youth Work Responses

Dr Eeva Sinisalo-Juha

ii. The Consultation Black Box: Tracing Public Input in Ireland's Hate Speech–Hate Crime Reform

Dr Luke Danagher and Professor Jennifer Schweppe

iii. Networking to fight underreporting in hate crimes. The Zero Hate Network

Marina González

iv. Performative Diversity or Genuine Inclusion? Rethinking Equity in Canadian Higher Education

Dr Wendy Fletcher

Moderator: Sinead Eaton, School of Law, University of Limerick

5. Addressing hate online

Room: KGB15

i. Democratising Online Hate Speech Governance: A Proposal for Independent Public Authorities and Civil Society Observatories

Professor Federico Oliveri

ii. Leveraging the Digital Services Act - Introduction to Appeals Centre Europe

Sophie-Charlotte Walter, Anna McCarthy Adams and Leo Twiggs

iii. Media and Online Hate: Implementing the Council of Europe Recommendations

Lavinia Pedol

iv. Algorithmic Political Hate Speech: A Conceptual Framework

Dr Gizem Yardimci

Moderator: Dr Emma Dolan, European Centre for the Study of Hate, University of Limerick

Day 2, 11.45am - 12.45pm Parallel Sessions 3: Purple



1. We Own Our Words: Tackling Hate Speech and Online Academic

Incivility Through Educative Approaches: Roundtable

Room: KBG10

Dr Wannette Van Eg Dom-Tuinstra and Bryony Gilbert

2. The Cure for Hate: Film Screening and Discussion Panel

Room: KGB12

Peter Hutchison and Tony McAleer

3. Hate crime in the criminal justice system (1)

Room: KGB15

i. Albanian practice of the use of CoE Recommendations on combating hate speech and hate crime

Dr Robert Gajda and Magistrate Gëzim Spahiu

ii. Bridging the Divide: Survivor, Police, and Community Perspectives on Collaborative Hate Crime Response in Canada

Kassandra Roul and Dr Michael Woodworth

iii. Understanding and Responding to the Impact of Hate Crime on Trust

Dr Anne-Mai Flyvholm and Rasmus Mortensen

iv. Psychological Profiles of Perpetrators in the Context of Hate Crime

Selen Soysal-Kazanç

Moderator: Natasha Walsh, European Centre for the Study of Hate, University of Limerick

4. Gendered experiences of hate (2)

Room: KBG13

i. 'It's the Women': Antifeminist Hate and Digital Violence as Democratic Threats.

Grit Marti Lange

ii. Necropolitical Relationality and Material Transition: A Case for Monstrosity.

Dr Yianna Liatsos

iii. Transphobia and the Production of Fatal Violence: A Cross-continental Analysis of Anti-Trans Homicide in the US and Europe

Mark Walters

iv. Computational Analysis of Immigration Narratives: Studying Gendered Experiences of Immigration and Integration in Ireland

Deepak John Reji

Moderator: Charlotte Gilmartin, Head of the Gender Equality Policies Unit, Secretary to the Gender Equality Commission (GEC), Council of Europe

5. Communicating hate

Room: KGB14

i. The Politics of Hate: IDF Soldiers' Videos and the Linguistic Making of Genocidal Violence

Dr Siti Nurnadilla Mohamad Jamil

ii. Online Hate Speech as a threat to freedom of expression. The case of public space in Poland.

Dr Anna Leszczuk-Fiedziukiewicz

iii. Artificial Intelligence Equity, Equal Protection, and Ethics

Dr Marc Brenman

iv. Crafting the Undeserving Victim: Hate Speech and Narrative Warfare in State Repression

Dr Fikret Demirçivi

Moderator: Dr Nita Mishra, European Centre for the Study of Hate, University of Limerick

6. Understanding hate online

Room: KGB16

i. Everyday Offence: The Overlooked Side of Online Communication

Dr Vahid Parvaresh and Dr Tahmineh Tayebi

ii. Beyond the Explicit: Characterizing Direct and Indirect Online Hate Speech Targeting Marginalized Groups in Portugal

Dr Rita Guerra and Dr Paula Carvalho

iii. Antisemitism and Islamophobia in online far-right subcultures: A cross-disciplinary approach to understanding online hate on TikTok and X

Nanna Ellen Amer

Moderator: Dr Pablo de Tezanos-Pinto, European Centre for the Study of Hate, University of Limerick

Day 2, 2.30pm - 4pm Parallel Sessions 4: Red



1. Criminalisation of hate speech

Room: KGB11

i. Fighting hate speech, protecting hateful speech

Professor Massimo Durante and Dott. Jacopo Ciani Sciolla

ii. When Hate Speech is Hate Crime: Identifying and Sanctioning Severe Forms of Hate Speech

Dr Audrey Fino

iii. Cross-border Impacts of Hate Speech and Hate Crime: How to Mitigate Harm Emanating from Another Jurisdiction

Abdulkerim Balci

Moderator: Agata Lynch, European Centre for the Study of Hate, University of Limerick

2. Hate crime in the criminal justice system (2)

Room: KGB15

i. From Law to Practice: Hate Crime Prosecution in Serbia

Jelena Jokanovic

ii. Typology and characteristics of perpetrators and victims of hate crimes - experience in the former Yugoslavia

Adrian Borka

iii. Transformations in thinking about hate: relationships, domestic spaces and conditions

Dr John Clayton

iv. Improving the Police Response to Hate Crime: Police Officer Perspectives and the Potential of Procedural Justice

Luke Hubbard

Moderator: Professor Mark Walters, Adjunct Professor, European Centre for the Study of Hate, University of Limerick

3. Understanding and addressing hate speech

Room: KGB13

i. Hating the poor, hating the Roma: hate speech against the ‘socially assisted’ in Romania

Dr Andreea Carstocea

ii. Hate Speech Legislation in Iceland: Legal Developments and Parliamentary Discourse

Dr Eyrun Eythorsdottir and Hildur Fjola Antonsdottir

iii. The Implications of Xenophobic Social Climate the UK’s Policy-Making: How the Labour Party is now led by Nigel Farage

Saff Coskun

Moderator: Dr Stefano Angeleri, European Centre for the Study of Hate, UL

4. Preventing Hate (3)

Room: KGB14

i. Hate Crime and Restorative Justice in Spain: A Legal Approach

Professor Dr Beatriz Souto Galván

ii. The ethics of combating hate

Associate Professor Birgitte Johansen and Dr Thomas Brudholm

iii. Living Through and Beyond Racism

Debbie Allen

Moderator: Dr Niloufar Omid, European Centre for the Study of Hate, UL

5. The continuum of hate

Room: KGB16

i. Preventing social media platforms from promoting extreme opinions and hate speech in Horn of Africa, promoting pluralistic digital space

Abdifatah Hassan

iii. Hate Speech and Misrepresentation as Catalysts for Ethnic Driven Violence: Cross Generic Reading of Post Rwandan Genocide Francophone African Testimonies

Dr Nicholas Osita Okolie

iii. Direct Provision from a Hate Speech Perspective

Dr Soraya Afzali

Moderator: Dr Xosé P. Boán, European Centre for the Study of Hate, UL

Challenging Hate: Protecting Human Rights and Strengthening Democracy

Conference hosted by the European Centre for the Study of Hate in association with the Council of Europe Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion

Plenary panels: Speakers

Day 1, 09:35-10:15

Introductory Panel

Judge Úna Ní Raifeartaigh, Judge of the European Court of Human Rights



Úna Ní Raifeartaigh has been serving as a Judge of the European Court of Human Rights since July 2024. Prior to this appointment, she was a Judge of the Court of Appeal from 2019 to 2024 and a Judge of the High Court from 2016 to 2019. Before that, Úna had a career as a practicing barrister for 23 years and, in that capacity, practiced primarily in the areas of criminal, public/administrative and

constitutional law. She was also involved in a number of public inquiries as well as cases before the ECtHR. As a judge, Úna was involved in a wide range of civil and criminal cases, including international child abduction cases, company, land law, tort and public law/administrative cases.

Úna studied at University College Dublin, earning a Bachelor of Civil Law degree in 1988 and later trained at the King's Inns, graduating as Brooke Scholar (1991). She began her career as a research assistant at the Law Reform Commission (1988-91), was appointed Reid Professor of Criminal Law at Trinity College Dublin (1991), before deciding to pursue a full-time career at the Bar from 1995 onwards. She is married with two adult sons and has many interests and pursuits outside the legal arenas.

Käthlin Sander, Chairperson, Council of Europe Steering Committee on Anti-



Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI)

Käthlin Sander is the Chair of the Council of Europe Steering Committee on Anti-discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI). She has an LL.M in Human Rights and has, in different roles, been working on promoting equality, including gender equality, for more than 20 years. During this time, her main responsibilities as a

policymaker have included developing national legislative and strategic framework for equal opportunities and equality, participating in planning and implementation of policy measures, but also building partnerships with civil society and state institutions, and taking actively part in international co-operation. Presently, she is the Head of Equal Opportunities Policy at the Equality Policies Department in the Estonian Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications.

Dr Wolfram Bechtel, Head of the Standards and Intercultural Inclusion Division and Secretary of the Steering Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI)



Dr Wolfram Bechtel is a lawyer and Secretary of the Steering Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion of the Council of Europe (CDADI). CDADI steers the Council of Europe's intergovernmental work to promote equality for all and build more inclusive societies that offer effective protection from discrimination and hate, that ensure equal participation in political and public life for

all without discrimination on any ground, and where diversity is respected. Wolfram Bechtel is also Head of the Standards and Intercultural Inclusion Division of the Council of Europe. Previously, he carried out country monitoring for the Council of Europe's European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI). Before joining the Council of Europe, Wolfram Bechtel has worked as a judge, a public prosecutor and a consultant in the German judiciary and administration. He has a Ph.D. in international and comparative private law of the University of Heidelberg.

Moderator: Professor Jennifer Schweppe, University of Limerick, Director of the European Centre for the Study of Hate/Centre for the Study of Hate and Inequalities



Dr Jennifer Schweppe (she/her) is a Professor in the School of Law the University of Limerick . Her research focuses on the intersection of law and social justice, and her commitment to understanding and addressing the challenges faced by marginalized groups in law has been a driving force throughout her career. Her research particularly explores these issues through the lens of hate crime and access to justice and she has published widely in the area, including as co-editor of major collections *De Gruyter European Handbook on Hate Crime* (De Gruyter, 2026) (with Mark Walters, Imran Awan, Mika Hagerlid, and Alexander Kondadov); *Critical Perspectives on Hate Crime* (Palgrave, 2017) (with Amanda Haynes and Seamus Taylor); and *The Globalisation of Hate* (Oxford University Press, 2016) (with Mark Walters). She was co-PI on the ground-breaking project *Irish Travellers Access to Justice* (European Centre for the Study of Hate, 2026) (with Sindy Joyce, Olive O'Reilly, Margaret O'Brien, David Joyce, and Amanda Haynes). With Professor Mark Walters, she was co-founder (in 2013) of the International Network for Hate Studies and she its Co-Director from 2013-2023. She now sits on its Advisory Board. Jennifer was appointed by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe as Independent Expert on Hate Crime to its Committee of Experts on Hate Crime.

Day 1, 10:15-11.15

Plenary Panel 1: Combating the Continuum of Hate

Professor Barbara Perry, UNESCO Chair in Hate Studies



Dr Barbara Perry is a Canadian criminologist and academic recognized for her work on hate crime, extremism, and social justice. She earned a BA in Social Behaviour (1985) at Queen's University, followed by a Master's degree in Sociology at the same university (1987). She later completed her PhD at Carleton University under Alan Hunt, publishing her dissertation on the Canadian Charter of Rights and hegemonic

politics in 1992.

Perry began focusing on hate crime research in 1993, motivated by a rise in anti-gay activism and violence in the state of Maine in the United States where she began her career at the University of Southern Maine. In 1996, she joined the Department of Criminal Justice at the University of Northern Arizona. In 2004, she returned home to Canada to join the fledgling Ontario Tech University as an associate professor in what is now the Faculty of Social Science and Humanities, soon becoming a Full Professor. She gained international recognition for her scholarship, including being named Critical Criminologist of the Year in 2007 by the American Society of Criminology for her work *Advancing Critical Criminology*.

In 2018, she founded the Centre on Hate, Bias and Extremism, aimed at advancing research and public awareness in the field. She was appointed UNESCO Chair in Hate Studies in 2020 and has received multiple academic honors. In 2024, she was appointed a Member of the Order of Canada for her contributions to research and advocacy.

Dr Stephanie Öner, Chairperson, former Council of Europe Committee of Experts on Hate Crime



Stephanie Öner has served as Deputy Head of Unit in the Directorate General for Criminal Law at the Ministry of Justice of Austria since 2024. She is also a lecturer at the Fachhochschule Wiener Neustadt (study program on business and cybercrime). In the past she worked as an assistant (prae-doc and post-doc) and a lecturer at the Institute of Criminal Law lectured at the University of Vienna. She is an author of numerous publications and lectures in the field of criminal law,

focusing *inter alia* on online-hate and hate crime. Between 2022 and 2023 she was the Chair of the Committee of Experts on Hate Crime of the Council of Europe. She holds a PhD from the University of Vienna (2006, Title: “European Union and Austrian Criminal Law”).

Dr Ebum Joseph, Special Rapporteur on Racial Equality and Racism, Ireland



Dr Ebum Joseph is a leading Inclusion and race relations consultant, and the founder and CEO of the Institute of Antiracism and Black Studies (IABS). She serves as Ireland’s Special Rapporteur on Racial Equality and Racism and is the module coordinator and lecturer for Black Studies at University College Dublin (UCD)—a pioneering course she established in 2018 as Ireland’s first. Dr Joseph is also the founder of the African Scholars Association Ireland (AfSAI), which she chaired

from 2018 to 2022. Her previous roles include Career Development Consultant at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI), Teaching Fellow at Trinity College Dublin (TCD), and Training and Employment Officer with the EPIC programme. An accomplished author, TV panellist, and equality activist, Dr Joseph’s research focuses on race, labour markets, and structural inequality. Her publications include *Critical Race Theory and Inequality in the Labour Market* (Manchester University Press, 2020); *Equity in the Workplace series: Stories of Black Irish Women in Ireland* (2024); *Stories of Black Irish women in academia* (2025), and *Challenging Perceptions of Africa in Schools* (Routledge, 2020). Dr Joseph is the award winning author of the IRJ Prize awarded to the paper adjudicated to represent the best original contribution to the journal in a given year. *‘Composite counterstorytelling as a technique for*

challenging ambivalence about race and racism in the labour market in Ireland. She is also a documentary Executive producer of '*Equity in the workplace*' and *ECHOES OF 2004*.

Moderator: Charlotte Gilmartin, Head of the Gender Equality Policies Unit, Secretary to the Gender Equality Commission (GEC), Council of Europe



Charlotte Gilmartin is Head of the Gender Equality Policy Unit of the Council of Europe and Secretary of the Council of Europe's [Gender Equality Commission](#). The Policy Unit and the Commission work to ensure that gender equality is integrated into all Council of Europe policies and to bridge the gap between international commitments and the reality for women in Europe. The Commission, whose members are

appointed by member states, provides advice and support to other Council of Europe bodies and member states. The Gender Equality Commission supports the implementation of the six objectives of the Council of Europe's Gender Equality Strategy 2024-2029.

Charlotte was previously Co-Secretary to the Steering Committee on Anti-discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI), specialising in work on hate speech, hate crime, artificial intelligence and intersectional discrimination. Charlotte started her career as a barrister qualified in England and Wales. She has also previously worked as a lawyer at the European Court of Human Rights and as judicial assistant to the President of the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom.

Day 1, 16:15-17.15

Plenary Panel 2: Victims and Victims' Rights

Professor Mark Walters, Honorary Professor, Sussex University; Adjunct Professor of Criminal Law and Hate Studies, European Centre for the Study of Hate/Centre for the



Study of Hate and Inequalities, University of Limerick

Professor Mark Walters is an internationally recognised scholar in criminal law and criminology whose research focuses predominantly on hate crime studies. He has authored or edited five books and over 50 academic publications, including *Criminalising Hate* (Palgrave), which was the recipient of the 2023 British Society of Criminology

Sophie and Sylvia Lancaster Prize, and is the lead editor of the recently published *European Handbook on Hate Crime* (De Gruyter). His scholarship has been supported by various external funders, including projects funded by the European Commission, British Academy, HEFCE, the College of Policing, and the Leverhulme Trust. An elected Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences, Mark combines rigorous socio-legal and criminological scholarship with real-world impact. He regularly advises governments, NGOs, and international organisations on legal frameworks to address hate crime offences – most recently serving as lead draftsman for Seychelles' 2024 Penal Code (Amendment) Act, Africa's first law to provide comprehensive hate crime protections for LGBTQ+ individuals. Mark currently works as an independent consultant and trainer. He also holds the affiliated positions of Honorary Professor of Law, University of Sussex, and Adjunct Professor of Criminal Law and Hate Studies, University of Limerick. Mark previously served as Deputy Head (Research) at Sussex Law School, University of Sussex (2021-2025) and as Unit of Assessment Lead for REF2029 preparations.

Dr Klára Kalibová, Director, In Iusticia



Dr Klára Kalibová – Director of IN IUSTITIA, lawyer, analyst, author. Her main focus and expertise is hate crime, hate speech and victims' rights. She has implemented research on hate crime (Forgotten Victims, 2010; Hate Crime Study for Fundamental Rights Agency 2013; Sexual Violence in the Czech Judiciary Practice 2013). Recently her

work focuses on victims' rights. She was a member of preparation group on victims' rights act within the Ministry of Justice, as well as the member of working group – Security within the Agency for Social Inclusion (2011). She is a member of the Czech Society for Criminology, RAN Voices of Victims of Terrorism and the Czech Chamber of Attorneys. She is a co-founder and the chair of the Association of Victim Service Providers, an umbrella organization dedicated to advocacy on behalf of victims' rights. In 2014 she was awarded the Alice G. Masaryk Human Rights Award for her commitment to protection of bias crime victims.

Dr Sindy Joyce, Lecturer in Traveller Studies, European Centre for the Study of Hate/Centre for the Study of Hate and Inequalities, University of Limerick



Dr Sindy Joyce is a Mincéir/Traveller from Newcastle West, County Limerick. She is a Human Rights Defender (HRD), a sociologist and a member of President Michael D Higgins Council of State. Her research focuses on Human Rights, racism, hate crime, ethnicity/identity, and social/political constructions of Irish Travellers. Her PhD thesis 'Mincéirs Siúladh: An ethnographic study of young Travellers'

experiences of racism in an Irish city' addressed the original and important question of how anti-Traveller racism shapes young people's use of and movement through public space. Sindy is also on the anti-racism committee for the National Action Plan Against Racism. In 2019, Sindy was part of the Irish delegation to present evidence to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on the treatment of Travellers in Ireland.

Marion Adam, Vice-Chair, former Council of Europe Committee of Experts on Hate Crime

Former Vice-Chair of the Council of Europe's Committee of Experts on Hate Crime, Head of the National Unit for Combating Online Hate (PNLH) from September 2024 to September 2025, and Acting Head of the Press, protection of freedoms and combating online hate (AC2) from February 2025 to September 2025 at the Paris Public Prosecutor's Office. Marion was part of a team of seven magistrates, supported by five clerks and three qualified assistants, working primarily on issues relating to online hate speech at national level, as well as, in Paris, on hate crimes and offences, discrimination, press offences, breaches of confidentiality, and offences committed by law enforcement officers in the course of their duties.

A magistrate since 2009, Marion has held various posts in different public prosecutor's offices across France before joining the Directorate of Criminal Affairs and Pardons at the Ministry of Justice in 2015, where she worked in particular as a drafter within the office responsible for drafting legislative and regulatory standards for special criminal law (organised crime, criminal labour law, public health, integrity, etc.). Marion then joined Section AC2 of the Paris Public Prosecutor's Office in 2019 and was involved in the establishment of the PNLH in 2021. Since September 2025, she has been a Deputy Advocate General at the Court of Cassation and has joined the Social Chamber of the Public Prosecutor's Office. Her day-to-day work involves civil cases, particularly in labour law, which raise complex legal issues.

Moderator: Ambassador Caitríona Doyle, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the Council of Europe, Strasbourg



Ambassador Doyle has served as Ireland's Permanent Representative to the Council of Europe since September 2023. Ambassador Doyle has previously served in Chicago (Vice-Consul), Washington (First Secretary, Political Affairs), and Paris (Deputy Head of Mission), and was most recently Director of Security, Corporate Compliance, and Coordination in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. She is a graduate of Trinity College Dublin (LLB, LLM).

Day 2, 09:30-10:45

Plenary Panel 3: Increasing trust and promoting inclusion

Nadejda Hriptievschi, former Council of Europe Committee of Experts on Combating Hate Speech



Nadejda Hriptievschi is a lawyer, specializing in human rights. She is a member of the Prosecutor Vetting Commission since 1 February 2024. She served as member of the Independent Evaluation Commission for assessing the integrity of candidates for the position of member in the self-administration bodies of judges and prosecutors between 4 April 2022 and 7 November 2025. Nadejda is a co-founder of the non-

governmental organization Legal Resources Centre from Moldova where she worked between 2010 and 2022 focusing on monitoring the justice sector in Moldova. Between June 2021 and July 2024, she was a member of the Independent Anti-Corruption Advisory Committee. Between September 2020 and December 2021, Nadejda was a member and Co-Rapporteur of the Council of Europe's Committee of Experts on Combating Hate Speech and between 2013 and 2018 she was a member of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI). Nadejda is a member of the Bar Association of Moldova since June 2011 (suspended license since 2015).

Nadejda's primary areas of expertise include judiciary, legal aid, and non-discrimination. She served as a consultant for different national and international organizations. Since April 2025 she is a national member of the European Network of legal experts in gender equality and non-discrimination, jointly managed by Human European Consultancy, the Migration Policy Group (MPG) and Utrecht University (UU) on behalf of the European Commission. She was closely involved in the legal aid reform in Moldova since 2003 and worked with the first Public Defender Office in Moldova from 2007 to 2011. She worked as Junior Legal Officer for Open Society Justice Initiative, Budapest, Hungary during 2003 – 2006, mainly focused on legal aid reforms. Nadejda received a Master of Laws in Comparative Constitutional Law with additional specialization in Human Rights at the Central European University in July 2001 and a law degree at the State University of Moldova in June 2000.

Rachael Moore, Rainbow Nation and ILGA Europe



Rachael Moore is an LGBTQIA+ activist based in Brussels, Belgium, with a background in community-led activism, mental health advocacy, and years of experience in bi+ spaces. Her experience at the European Parliament has deepened her understanding of discrimination faced by Black people and people of colour. In 2018, she co-founded Rainbow Nation Brussels, which advocates for the visibility and wellbeing of queer, trans, Black, and brown individuals, promoting diversity and inclusivity beyond whiteness and white supremacy. The organisation takes a “Nothing about Us without Us” approach to address racism, transphobia, and xenophobia within the LGBTQIA+ community. Rainbow Nation offers tools for QTBPoC and organises activities for those facing intersectional oppression.

Being on the board of ILGA-Europe means having the responsibility to ensure that marginalized voices, particularly those at the intersections of race, migration status, and sexual orientation, are not just heard but actively centered in European LGBTQI+ advocacy work. Rachael contributes by leveraging her experience from Rainbow Nation Brussels and the ILGA World Bisexual Committee to strengthen intersectional approaches in our movement, while bringing strategic planning skills and a commitment to transparency that ensures we’re building sustainable, inclusive frameworks for change.

Ciarán O'Connor, Institute for Strategic Dialogue



Ciarán O'Connor is a Senior Analyst with the Institute for Strategic Dialogue, an NGO that researches online hate, extremism and disinformation. Ciarán conducts research and investigations that focus on technology, extremism, and AI. Outside of ISD, Ciarán regularly speaks to Irish and international media about these topics, and his writing has appeared in the Irish Times, TheJournal.ie and the Irish Examiner.

Prior to joining ISD, Ciarán previously worked as a journalist on the investigations team at Storyful. He is an ongoing contributor to Media Literacy Ireland’s ‘Be Media Smart’ campaign.



Professor Kehinde Andrews, Birmingham City University

Dr Kehinde Andrews (born January 1983) is a British academic, author, and leading voice in Black Studies. Of British African-Caribbean heritage and raised in Birmingham, he earned his PhD in Sociology and Cultural Studies from the University of Birmingham in 2011, with a thesis exploring Black radicalism and the supplementary school movement. A Professor of Black Studies at Birmingham City University's School of Social Sciences, Andrews holds the distinction of being the first Black Studies professor in the United Kingdom. He led the establishment of the first Black Studies programme in Europe at Birmingham City University and serves as Director of the Centre for Critical Social Research. He is also the founder of the Harambee Organisation of Black Unity and co-chair of the UK Black Studies Association.

Andrews is a prolific public intellectual and media commentator, regularly contributing to outlets including The Guardian, The Independent, New Statesman, and CNN, as well as appearing frequently on the BBC. His work spans issues of race, racism, colonialism, slavery, and Black radicalism, and he has been a consistent critic of institutional racism in British universities and society. Through his scholarship, media presence, and community leadership, Andrews remains one of the UK's most prominent and influential voices on race and equality.

Moderator: Dr Wolfram Bechtel, Head of the Standards and Intercultural Inclusion Division and Secretary of the Steering Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI)

See Panel 1 for biography

Day 2, 13:45-14:30

Plenary Panel 4: Growing up in an Inclusive Europe

Mariam Tartousi (Norway), Bureau member of the Advisory Council on Youth (CCJ) of the Council of Europe, Member of *No Hate Speech Network*



Mariam Tartousi is an elected Bureau member of the Advisory Council on Youth (CCJ), a Council of Europe committee composed of youth civil society representatives that advises the Committee of Ministers and the Council of Europe as a whole on youth policy issues and youth perspectives. She built her activism through podcasting in diaspora communities, leading anti-hate speech campaigns, and advocating for accessibility with blind youth in Norway. Dedicated to turning differences into dialogue, Mariam champions inclusion by promoting democratic participation and digital resilience, striving to counter online hate speech and ensure safer, more inclusive digital spaces. Her commitment is rooted in both personal experience and professional impact, collaborating with NGOs and youth organizations across Europe. During her mandate, she works to advance effective youth participation and amplify underrepresented voices, inspiring others to reimagine a more accessible and equitable future for all.

Robert Örell, Executive Director of TRANSFORM and Board President of Violence Prevention USA



Robert Örell has more than two decades of experience in the P/CVE field working with the rehabilitation and reintegration of violent extremists. For more than fifteen years he provided interventions with clients in exit work. For over ten years, he worked as a director and manager of exit programs. Currently, he works as a senior international expert focused on capacity development, training, and setting up exit programs. Robert is the Executive Director of [TRANSFORM](#) and the board president of Violence Prevention USA. His recent work includes advising policy guidelines and recommendations, research interviews with former members of violent extremism, online counselling, and understanding radicalisation in online gaming communities. He advises on several projects

around the world. Robert co-teaches an academic course on the psychology of violence and hate, addressing violent radicalisation and violent extremism.

For 12 years (2011-2024), he was a member of the Steering Committee of the European Commission's Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN), co-chairing the working group on Exit/Rehabilitation. Robert was the director of Exit Sweden for ten years and the program director at Exit USA for three years. In 2020-2021, he advised and contributed to the Council of Europe's counter-terrorism strategy. In 2016, Robert held a [TEDx](#) at TEDx Vilnius. He holds a master's degree in Humanitarian Action and Peacebuilding from the University of Oxford Brooks/UNITAR, and has studied psychotherapy and social pedagogy.

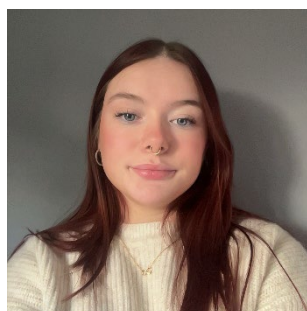
Aoife Lawlor, Researcher (Cooperative Work Placement), European Centre for the Study of Hate/Centre for the Study of Hate and Inequalities, University of Limerick



Aoife Lawlor is an undergraduate Bachelor of Arts Student studying Digital Culture and Communication with sociology. Her main academic interest is the importance of social interaction in regard to both a sociological perspective and a technological perspective. During Aoife's academic progression she was an ambassador for UL Dignity and Respect where she developed a stronger understanding of discrimination and how it can take place at universities. She is currently working as an Intern at the European Centre for the Study of

Hate and aims to apply her knowledge of her degree so far to support the faculty. This role provides her with valuable experience in a research focused environment which will strongly aid her academic development. After she completes her undergraduate degree Aoife plans to continue working in the area of equality and social research.

Katie O'Sullivan, Researcher (Cooperative Work Placement), European Centre for the Study of Hate/Centre for the Study of Hate and Inequalities, University of Limerick



Katie O'Sullivan is a second-year undergraduate student studying sociology and geography in the University of Limerick. She has a strong interest in how social structures shape people's lived experiences. Her academic interests include the intersections of inequality, and how marginalised communities navigate the structures within society, and their access to supports. Through her coursework of sociological theory and human geography she has developed an understanding of how the factors at play within society affect the people within that society. Currently completing an internship with the European centre for Hate Studies, in UL is an opportunity for Katie further her understanding of how social systems affect different people, and how those systems are being shaped to include more inclusivity for minority communities. Katie finds the commitment of this centre to understand and address the challenges faced by these minority communities admirable and an inspiration to understanding the world from every perspective. In the future Katie wants to combine her interest in social equality and geography with renewable energy. She wants to create something that is affordable, attainable for everyone and doesn't negatively affect the earth. She wants to be part of a more comfortable and sustainable world for everyone, and to influence people to take a step in the right direction, both socially and sustainably.

Nurjahan Islam, Researcher (Cooperative Work Placement), European Centre for the Study of Hate/Centre for the Study of Hate and Inequalities, University of Limerick



Nurjahan Islam is a second-year Arts student at the University of Limerick, majoring in Economics and Mathematics. Throughout her studies, Nurjahan has taken modules in Sociology, Politics and International Relations, broadening her interdisciplinary knowledge within the Arts faculty. As part of her Economics coursework, she has worked with statistical software such as R to analyse data and create visualizations for research projects. Her academic background also includes advanced coursework in algebra, linear algebra, and calculus. Alongside her academic and professional pursuits, Nurjahan has been actively involved in volunteering and student life. She received a

Gold President's Volunteer Award for completing over 60 hours of volunteering, including participation in the International Buddy Programme and various clubs and societies. Following her placement, she hopes to continue developing her research skills while contributing to meaningful social impact initiatives.

Moderator: Dr Viktor Kunderák, Vice Chair, Council of Europe Steering Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI) -



Viktor Kunderák is an international human rights lawyer and the Director of the Human Rights and Protection of Minorities Department in the Government Office of the Czech Republic. He currently serves as the vice-chair of the Council of Europe Steering Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI), and represents

Czechia in the same committee. Previously, he had served as a Hate Crime Officer at the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) where he also took up the role of the Senior Advisor on Freedom of Religion or Belief. In the former role, Viktor Kunderák has led a globally most comprehensive hate crime data collection, myriad training efforts for law enforcement, prosecution, judiciary and civil society across the region, advised governments on hate crime legislation and policies. He holds two master's degrees – in law, and human rights and democratization, respectively – as well as a Ph.D. in international public law from the Charles University in Prague.

Closing Panel

Challenging Hate Conference – closing remarks



Dr Matteo Tracchi, Hate Speech and Hate Crime Unit, Council of Europe

Dr Matteo Tracchi is senior advisor on Hate Speech, Hate Crime, and Artificial Intelligence at the Council of Europe Steering Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI). He is responsible for the implementation of the Mission-Driven Initiative [“Enhancing multi-stakeholder responses to hate speech and hate crime”](#), funded by the EEA and Norway Grants, which aims to combat hate crimes, curb online hate speech, and counter disinformation, including by using human rights and fact-based narratives. Prior to joining the Council of Europe, Matteo worked as Human Rights and Child Protection Officer for the UN in Albania. He also previously worked for Amnesty International, advised local government administration on human rights issues and held research positions within academia. Matteo holds an International Joint PhD in Human Rights, Society, and Multi-level Governance from the University of Padova, Italy.

Käthlin Sander, Chairperson, Council of Europe Steering Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI) (*see Introductory panel for biography*)

Professor Jennifer Schweppe, European Centre for the Study of Hate/Centre for the Study of Hate and Inequalities, University of Limerick (*see Introductory panel for biography*)

Moderator: Charlotte Gilmartin, Head of the Gender Equality Policies Unit, Secretary to the Gender Equality Commission (GEC), Council of Europe (*see Panel 1 for biography*)

Challenging Hate: Protecting Human Rights and Strengthening Democracy

Conference hosted by the European Centre for the Study of Hate in association with the Council of Europe Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion

Moderators – Parallel sessions

Day 1, 11:45am - 1.15pm Parallel Sessions 1: Green

Panel 1: Dr Luke Danagher, European Centre for the Study of Hate, UL



Luke Danagher is a legal academic at the University of Limerick and a researcher with the European Centre for the Study of Hate. His research centres on hate crime and hate speech, with a focus on criminalisation and the principles that should constrain it, the design and implementation of hate crime legislation, and the legitimacy of law reform processes. He has particular interest in how evidence, consultation, and civil society advocacy shape legislative outcomes, and in the procedural standards that should govern criminal justice policymaking where reforms affect minoritised communities. His work combines doctrinal analysis with socio-legal attention to institutions, policy narratives, and the practical operation.

Panel 2: Professor Anca Minescu, European Centre for the Study of Hate, University of Limerick



Anca Minescu is a social psychologist who works in the broad field of ethnic relations, looking at people's attitudes and interactions with members from different ethnic or political groups. She researches social and political change, migration, diversity and inclusion from a social-psychological and cross-cultural perspective, using different research methodologies to capture the interaction between social context and individuals. She wants to contribute to a better world by increasing intercultural competence and acceptance of diversity and reducing prejudice and marginalization.

Panel 3: Charlotte Gilmartin, Head of the Gender Equality Policies Unit, Secretary to the Gender Equality Commission (GEC), Council of Europe



Charlotte Gilmartin is Head of the Gender Equality Policy Unit of the Council of Europe and Secretary of the Council of Europe's [Gender Equality Commission](#). The Policy Unit and the Commission work to ensure that gender equality is integrated into all Council of Europe policies and to bridge the gap between international commitments and the reality for women in Europe. The Commission, whose members are appointed by member states, provides advice and support to other Council of Europe bodies and member states. The Gender Equality Commission supports the implementation of the six objectives of the Council of Europe's Gender Equality Strategy 2024-2029. Charlotte was previously Co-Secretary to the Steering Committee on Anti-discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI), specialising in work on hate speech, hate crime, artificial intelligence and intersectional discrimination. Charlotte started her career as a barrister qualified in England and Wales. She has also previously worked as a lawyer at the European Court of Human Rights and as judicial assistant to the President of the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom.

Panel 4: Natasha Walsh, European Centre for the Study of Hate, University of Limerick



Natasha Walsh is a serving member of An Garda Síochána, the Irish Police Force, holding the rank of Sergeant. She is currently studying toward a PhD at the University of Limerick, examining police attitudes toward domestic abuse. She has previously held specialised roles in victim service provision which has guided her research interests. She is the recipient of a research scholarship funded by the Doctoral College at the University of Limerick. Natasha completed an MSc in Criminology and Criminal Psychology at the University of Portsmouth (2022), a BA in Public Management (Law and the Administration of Justice in the Institute of Public Administration (2016) and a BA in Policing Studies in the Garda College in Templemore accredited by the University of Limerick (2008).

Panel 5: Dr Yianna Liatsos, European Centre for the Study of Hate, University of Limerick



Yianna Liatsos is an Associate Professor of English at the University of Limerick, Ireland. She teaches African and Postcolonial Literatures with an emphasis on Indigenous and Refugee writing. Her current research explores narratives of temporal dissonance in medical and environmental humanities, and more specifically, the relational dynamics and social orientation of texts associated with terminality.

Panel 6: Dr Stefano Angeleri, European Centre for the Study of Hate University of Limerick



Dr Stefano Angeleri is an Assistant Professor at the UL School of Law. Dr Angeleri previously held a Marie Skłodowska-Curie (MSCA) postdoctoral fellowship at Queen's University Belfast and Universidad del Rosario, Bogotá (2021–2024), and visiting scientist position at the François-Xavier Bagnoud (FXB) Center for Health and Human Rights at Harvard University (2023-2025). Angeleri's work focuses on health,

migration, and social rights, examining the complexities and inconsistencies of human rights law and rights-based approaches through both doctrinal and sociolegal research. His scholarship bridges academic inquiry with intersectoral initiatives, integrating interdisciplinary perspectives and amplifying the voices of diverse actors and stakeholders.

Day 1, 2.15pm - 3.45pm Parallel Sessions 2: Blue



Panel 2: Eoin Quill, School of Law, University of Limerick



Eoin Quill is an Associate Professor in the School of Law at the University of Limerick. His principal area of research interest is the law of torts, with a focus on methodology and structure in the analysis of the legal principles governing compensation claims. He also has a broader interest in civil obligations, encompassing contract, torts, and restitution.

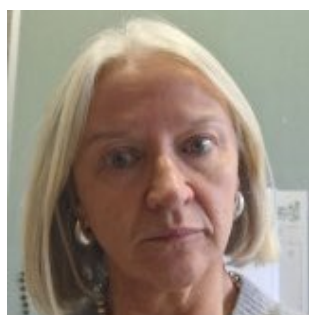
Panel 3: Dr Nita Mishra, European Centre for the Study of Hate, University of Limerick



Dr Nita Mishra is a lecturer in the Dept of Politics & Public Administration of University of Limerick. Her research interests lie in feminist research methodologies, rights-based approaches to development, grassroots governance, women & empowerment processes, and the right to food. Her poetry, widely published, is critically acclaimed as the future of Irish feminisms. Dr Mishra is the

current Chair of Development Studies Association of Ireland, and a Director on the European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes.

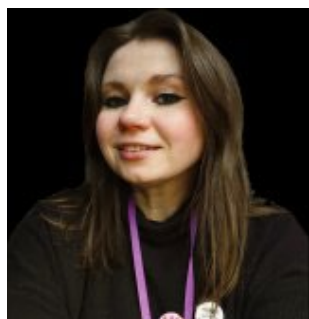
Panel 4: Sinead Eaton, School of Law, University of Limerick



Sinead Eaton is an Associate Professor in the School of Law at the University of Limerick. Sinead's research interest lie in the area of Company and Competition law. Sinead graduated from National University of Ireland, UCD with a BCL in 1988 and, having graduated from The Honorable Society of Kings Inns with a Degree of Barrister at Law, was called to the Irish Bar in 1990. On foot of an award of a

scholarship by the Department of Education Sinead completed a bilingual postgraduate course in EU law at the College of Europe in Bruges, following which she did a stage at DG Competition of the European Commission in Brussels. Sinead then spent a total of eight years working as a legal adviser to major Irish financial institutions.

Panel 5: Dr Emma Dolan, European Centre for the Study of Hate, University of Limerick



Emma Dolan is an Associate Professor in the Department of Politics and Public Relations at the University of Limerick. Before coming to UL, she completed her PhD in Politics and International Relations and took up a one-year Teaching Fellowship at the University of Aberdeen.

Emma works on themes of International Relations, Gender and Feminist Politics, Critical Military Studies, and Peace and Conflict

Studies. She is currently researching conflict-related sexual violence, cultural militarisation and war commemoration in Scotland, public safety and gender inequality in Limerick City, and the negotiation of secrecy and accountability by organisations through public apologies.

Day 2, 11.45am - 12.45pm Parallel Sessions 3: Purple



Panel 3: Natasha Walsh, European Centre for the Study of Hate, University of Limerick

[See biography above, Session 1, Panel 4]

Panel 4: Charlotte Gilmartin, Head of the Gender Equality Policies Unit, Secretary to the Gender Equality Commission (GEC), Council of Europe [See biography above, Session 1, Panel 3]

Panel 5: Dr Nita Mishra, European Centre for the Study of Hate, University of Limerick [See biography above, Session 1, Panel 3]

Panel 6: Dr Pablo de Tezanos-Pinto, European Centre for the Study of Hate, University of Limerick

Pablo de Tezanos-Pinto is an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of Limerick. His research focuses on the consequences of contextual levels of social integration, such as those in a particular neighbourhood or classroom, and how people may establish and maintain meaningful relationships across social groups. More recently, he has also studied the way people behave in public or shared spaces, topics related to social exclusion and marginalisation such as bullying, and also the study of political participation, with a special interest in how and when marginalised groups may engage in political movements and protests because of their discontent with the political system.

Day 2, 2.30pm - 4pm Parallel Sessions 4: Red



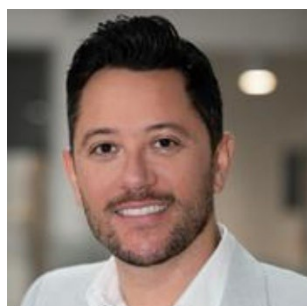
Panel 1: Agata Lynch, European Centre for the Study of Hate, University of Limerick



Agata Lynch is a Doctoral Researcher in Sociology at the University of Limerick (UL), with expertise in mixed-methods research and the sociology of education. Her doctoral research project focuses on gender and education, particularly within STEM fields. Agata qualified as a Polish attorney-at-law in 2012 after earning a Master of Law (Magister Prawa) from the University of Warsaw (2005). She later

transitioned into the social sciences, completing an Honours Master of Arts in Gender, Culture, and Society at UL in 2018. She holds a keen academic interest in the intersections of qualitative and mixed-methods research, ethics and research integrity, spanning the full range from paradigms to ethical dilemmas and practical solutions, including those arising from the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI). She is also interested in the study of social conflict and hostility, and in the reciprocal relationship between these phenomena and public discourse and social relations.

Panel 2: Professor Mark Walters, Adjunct Professor, European Centre for the Study of Hate, University of Limerick

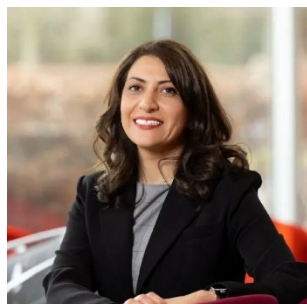


Mark Walters is an Adjunct Professor in Criminal Law and Hate Studies at the University of Limerick, and Honorary Professor of Law at Sussex Law School. His research interests are focused primarily on hate crime studies, as well as criminal law and criminal justice reform with a special emphasis on restorative justice practice and theory.

Mark's research has a particular focus on anti-LGBTQ+ hate and LGBTQ+ rights more broadly. Mark completed his doctorate in law (criminology) specialising in hate crime and restorative justice at the Centre for Criminology, University of Oxford (2012). He has also completed an MSc in Criminology and Criminal Justice (Research Methods) at the Centre for Criminology University of Oxford (2008), an LLM specialising in criminal justice at the University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia (2006), and an LLB, at the University of Sussex (2002).

Panel 3: Dr Stefano Angeleri, European Centre for the Study of Hate, University of Limerick
[See biography above, Session 1, Panel 6]

Panel 4: Dr Niloufar Omid, European Centre for the Study of Hate, University of Limerick



Niloufar Omid is the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Policy and Project Development Officer at the University of Limerick (UL). Holding a Ph.D. in International Human Rights Law from the Irish Centre for Human Rights, School of Law, University of Galway, and an LLM in International Law, she specialises in the right to peace as a prerequisite for equitable, peaceful, and inclusive societies. Dr Omid

is a ministerial appointee to the Advisory Committee on Racism and Racial Equality which is dedicated to monitoring the implementation of the National Action Plan Against Racism (NAPAR), alongside the Special Rapporteur for Race Equality in Ireland. Niloufar developed and authored the UL Dignity & Respect Policy and serves as Chairperson of the Ethnic Diversity Forum (EDF) at UL.

Panel 5: Dr Xosé P Boán, European Centre for the Study of Hate, University of Limerick



Xosé P Boán is an Associate Professor in Iberian Studies and Course Director of the BA in European Studies. His research interests comprise Iberian literature, film, and graphic narratives & Southern Cone cinemas with a focus on narratives of crises; memory; migration; masculinities; violence; ruralism; and Galician studies. Xosé earned his PhD at Tulane University (New Orleans, 2017) and previously taught

at Rhodes College in Memphis, TN and at the State University of New York, Oswego. He is the co-editor of Netflix' Spain: Critical Perspectives (Routledge, 2023) and his most recent scholarly work has appeared in venues such as the Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics(2024), Studies in Comics (2021), Quarterly Review of Film and Video (2020), Romance Studies (2019), Transitions: Journal of Franco-Iberian Studies(2018), Revista de Estudios Hispánicos(2018), and Variaciones Borges (2016).

Challenging Hate: Protecting Human Rights and Strengthening Democracy

Conference hosted by the European Centre for the Study of Hate in association with the Council of Europe Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion

Scholarship Recipients

Through the Higher Education of Ireland *Path 4 Phase 1 Inclusive Environment Fund*, the Office for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at the University of Limerick along with the European Centre for the Study of Hate was successful in securing funding for six scholarships for the conference. These scholarships were designed to ensure that early career and underrepresented researchers could attend and participate in the conference and pay for the travel, accommodation, and registration for scholarship awardees. We would like to thank Dr Niloufar Omid of the University of Limerick Office of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion for her work in securing this funding and supporting scholars in this way.

Our HEA Scholars are:

- Adrian Borka
- Dr Dimitra Filippou
- Grit Lange
- Dr Muluken Asegidew Chekol
- Natalie Gunthel
- Dr Nicholas Osita Tiko
- Dr Ana Isabel Leal Lobato

Given the large number of applications, the European Centre for the Study of Hate made a decision to partially match the funding, and so a second set of scholarships was awarded, which paid for the accommodation and registration for these scholarship awardees.

Our European Centre for the Study of Hate Scholarship recipients are:

- Lavinia Pedol
- Dr Siti Nurnadilla Mohamad Jamil
- Stevi Kitsou
- ellen stohl

In total, we awarded seven HEA Scholarships, and four ECSH Scholarships, along with 45 stipends funded by the Council of Europe, the Permanent Representation from Ireland to the Council of Europe, and the European Centre for the Study of Hate.



Challenging Hate:

Protecting Human Rights and Strengthening Democracy

**Conference hosted by the European Centre for the Study of Hate in association
with the Council of Europe Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and
Inclusion**

Part B: Book of Abstracts (pp 44- 224)

Introduction

The conference, “Challenging Hate: Protecting Human Rights and Strengthening Democracy” is organised by the European Centre for the Study of Hate at University of Limerick in association with the Council of Europe Steering Committee on Anti-discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI).

The conference focuses on the practical application of two key Council of Europe Recommendations: CM/Rec(2022)16 on combating hate speech; and CM/Rec(2024)4 on combating hate crime. With over 80 speakers and delegates from 36 countries across the world, the conference brings together different perspectives from people working across sectors on combating hate speech and hate crime.

This book of abstracts contains a short account of each paper delivered at the conference, as well as some extended abstracts of the individuals who were unable to attend.

Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this Book of Abstracts are those of the individual authors and are not to be attributed to the University of Limerick, the Council of Europe, or the conference organising team. The University of Limerick, the Council of Europe, and the conference organising team accept no responsibility for any errors or omissions, and the contents of the Book of Abstracts are provided for informational purposes only and are not intended to constitute or be relied upon as legal authority.

Professor Jennifer Schweppe

On behalf of the conference organising team

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Luiz Augusto Ruffo and Marcelo Maciel Ramos



Session 1, Panel 1

Critically interrogating Strasbourg's stance on criminalising hate speech and its approach to intermediary liability compared to the Digital Services Act –

Roundtable

Prof Gavin Phillipson¹, Dr Natalie Alkiviadou², Dr Eliza Bechtold³

¹University of Bristol Law School, ²Vanderbilt University, ³Bonavero Institute of Human Rights, University of Oxford

CM/Rec(2022)16 advises that '[t]he Criminal law should only be applied as a last resort and for the most serious expressions of hatred' and 'Member states should ensure that...[relevant] legislation fully meets the requirements of...the relevant case law of the [ECtHR]'. This Roundtable will discuss the real concern that that the ECtHR's approach in this area permits criminal sanctions on speech that do not in fact represent a 'last resort' for the 'most serious expressions of hatred'. It will consider the absence of a clear delineation in the Court's methodology between speech that may be restricted under Article 10(2) and speech that falls outside Article 10 altogether because it is seen as falling within Article 17 (see e.g. *Lilliendahl v Iceland* (2020)). It will debate the proposition that the above has resulted in a framework that lacks a clear and predictable principles and allows states to prosecute speech that falls well outside of international human rights law and guidance, including in particular the OHCHR Rabat Plan of Action.

There is also a concern that the conviction of politicians for political speech that clearly falls well below 'the most serious expressions of hatred' (as in *Féret v. Belgium* 2009) and even for the comments of others on their social media accounts (*Sanchez v France*, 2023) may be having a counter-productive effect, fuelling, rather than combatting, the rise in far-Right populist parties in Europe.

CM/Rec(2022) is also crucially concerned with online hate speech and the cooperation between states and online intermediaries, especially social media platforms to moderate the potentially harmful effects of such speech. The speakers will discuss



whether Strasbourg's approach here is in harmony with that of EU law on this issue, now under the Digital Services Act and whether there is a coherent and effective pan-European approach to these matters.

Speaker biographies:

Gavin Phillipson has published widely in the fields of European, UK and comparative human rights law, in leading law journals in the UK, Australia, Canada and the US and is co-author of *Media Freedom under the UK Human Rights Act* (2006, OUP), with Fenwick. His work has been cited in judgments by the UK High Court, Court of Appeal, former House of Lords and Supreme Court in the UK, by the Canadian Supreme Court, New Zealand Court of Appeal and by the Media Lawyer's Association in intervention before the ECtHR in *Von Hannover v Germany* (no 2) (2012).

Dr Natalie Alkiviadou is a leading scholar in the fields of freedom of expression, the far-right, hate speech, hate crime and non-discrimination. She has published three monographs on the far-Right and her fourth on Hate Speech and the European Court of Human Rights (Routledge, 2025) She participated in the High-Level Group on Combatting Racism, Xenophobia and Other Forms of Intolerance, was country researcher for the 2019 European Network against Racism report on Hate Crime and 2022 report on structural racism. She has drafted handbooks strategy papers and reports for projects funded by the European Commission and the European Youth Foundation.

Dr Bechtold researches freedom of expression at the national, regional, and international levels with a focus on the regulation of extreme speech in the digital age, on which she has published several articles and book chapters in leading journals and collections. Prior to entering academia, she practiced law in the United States for nearly a decade, including serving as the Legal Director of the ACLU of New Mexico. In this capacity she litigated human rights cases before federal and state courts and engaged in advocacy efforts throughout the state in relation to LGBTQ rights, immigrants' rights, and reproductive freedom.



Session 1, Panel 2: European understandings of hate

Hate speech in European Law: Between the Council of Europe and the EU

Stevi Kitsou

Maastricht University, Maastricht, Netherlands

Hate speech constitutes a specific form of discrimination that undermines human dignity, equality, and equal participation. Unlike hate crime, which entails material harm, hate speech operates through stigmatising and exclusionary discourse that targets individuals and groups on the basis of fundamental identity characteristics. Its harm lies not only in its potential to incite violence but in its capacity to deny equal social standing and silence those affected. This paper examines the interrelationship between the Council of Europe and the European Union in shaping legal responses to hate speech, focusing on the extent to which EU law reflects the broader European human rights framework.

Building on the European Court of Human Rights' case law and the normative guidance developed by the Council of Europe, Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)16, the paper conceptualises hate speech as a spectrum of expressions varying in severity and impact, requiring differentiated legal responses. This approach moves beyond a public order rationale and frames hate speech as conduct incompatible with human dignity and equality, regardless of whether it reaches the threshold of criminality.

Against this background, the paper critically assesses the EU's current framework, with focus on the Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA. It argues that the EU's predominant reliance on criminal law and its narrow focus on racism and xenophobia fail to capture the broader discriminatory nature of hate speech as articulated within the Council of Europe system. The conflation of hate speech with hate crime further obscures their distinct legal interests and risks justifying either overly restrictive or insufficiently tailored responses.

The paper contends that greater normative coherence between the two legal orders requires the EU to recognise hate speech as a form of discrimination in its own right.



Integrating anti-discrimination law alongside criminal measures would enable more proportionate and effective protection and strengthen consistency across Member States.

Speaker biography:

Stevi Kitsou is a PhD researcher in the Department of European Law at Maastricht University. Her doctoral research examines the multifaceted challenges posed by hate speech on social media to the EU legal order. Her research interests lie primarily in EU law, the protection of fundamental rights, and digital governance. She is a member of the Maastricht Centre for European Law (MCEL), the Ius Commune Research School, the Netherlands Network for Human Rights Research (NNHRR), and a founding member and research associate of Simeio-Researching & Confronting the Far Right, in Athens, Greece.



Session 1, Panel 2: European understandings of hate

The Legal Defence of Tolerance: How Article 2 TEU Can Confront State-Driven Intolerance in the EU

Dr Sara Benedi Lahuerta

University College Dublin, Dublin, Ireland, Ireland

Across the EU, several Member States have increasingly adopted measures that stigmatise minorities, restrict individual freedoms, and legitimise exclusion. Legislation targeting LGBTQ+ people, restrictive migration and housing regimes, and “neutrality” rules disproportionately affecting Muslim women illustrate a broader pattern of state-driven intolerance: the institutionalisation of discriminatory norms by state authorities themselves. This paper argues that these developments constitute not only breaches of equality law but systemic threats to democratic resilience, as they erode pluralism, and normalise hostility against certain groups.

Against this background, the paper reassesses Article 2 TEU—until recently often treated as aspirational—through the lenses of EU equality and anti-discrimination law and constitutional theory. Drawing on evolving case law of the Court of Justice of the EU, particularly *Commission v Hungary* (C-769/22) and *Slagelse Almennyttige Boligselskab* (C-417/23), the paper demonstrates that Article 2 TEU's constitutional principles are increasingly shaping both the interpretation and enforcement of EU equality norms.

The paper advances two central claims connected to debates on equality and democracy:

1. Interpretative Claim: Article 2 TEU provides a normative anchor to guide the application and interpretation of EU equality law. Doing so strengthens equality law's capacity to address structural discrimination, which can feed democratic backsliding.
2. Enforcement Claim: Article 2 TEU can serve as a coercive constitutional tool in infringement proceedings where Member States engage in persistent or systemic



discrimination. This allows to defend equality and anti-discrimination law itself against narratives or reforms that seek to weaken or circumvent it.

By treating equality law as an instrument of democratic preservation, the paper situates EU equality law within broader conversations about backsliding, illiberalism, and the erosion of minority rights. It shows that embedding Article 2 TEU within equality-law reasoning strengthens the Union's capacity to safeguard pluralism, protect minorities, and reinforce its commitment to equality, dignity, and non-discrimination.

Speaker biography:

Dr Sara Benedi Lahuerta is an Associate Professor at University College Dublin, Sutherland School of Law. Prior to that, she lectured at the University of Southampton, where she founded the Stefan Cross Research Centre for Women, Equality and Law. Her research focuses on discrimination and employment law (at EU and comparative levels) and has been published in prestigious peer-reviewed journals like *Legal Studies*, *Common Market Law Review*, the *European Law Journal*, and *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. She is the former Editor-In-Chief of the *BCCE E-Journal*, and the Co-Director of its Pay Equity and Living Wage Working Group. She is also the co-covenor of one of the UCD Equalities Studies Centre's clusters on human rights, equality and discrimination.



Session 1, Panel 2: European understandings of hate

Systemic Deficiencies Hindering the Effective Challenge of Hate Speech and Hate Crimes in Bulgaria

Dr Deyana Marcheva

Associate Professor, New Bulgarian University, Sofia, Bulgaria

This paper examines the systemic deficiencies within Bulgaria's legal and institutional framework that significantly hinder the effective challenge of hate speech and hate crimes. Although Bulgaria has adopted legislative measures targeting these offenses, persistent structural problems undermine their implementation and enforcement. Key issues include judicial and prosecutorial biases against vulnerable groups, inadequate training and awareness among legal practitioners, lack of clear procedural protocols, and insufficient victim support mechanisms. These challenges are further compounded by widespread misinterpretation and divergence from the standards set by the European Court of Human Rights, resulting in inconsistent judicial rulings that insufficiently protect marginalized communities.

By analyzing recent case law and institutional practices, this study demonstrates how systemic barriers sustain impunity for perpetrators and deepen the social exclusion of vulnerable groups, including LGBTQI individuals, Roma minorities, and refugees. Notably, Bulgarian academic scholarship typically records case law analyses without critically assessing the quality of legal reasoning or identifying dehumanizing narratives within judicial decisions. Issues of prejudice and stereotyping in legislation and adjudication remain largely unaddressed, as formal guarantees of compliance with human rights standards are generally deemed sufficient. This perspective ignores whether and how judicial decisions may be influenced by negative emotions, biases, and stereotypes – factors recognized by international human rights conventions as key obstacles to equality.

Consequently, Bulgaria's legal discourse proves largely impermeable to effectively challenging hate speech and hate crimes. To overcome these challenges, this paper



calls for comprehensive reforms including improved data collection and transparency, targeted training and awareness-raising for judges and prosecutors, and enhanced dialogue between academics, NGOs, and practitioners. Ultimately, fostering a human rights-based approach and aligning national practices with ECHR jurisprudence are essential for establishing a legal environment that effectively combats hate speech and hate crimes while protecting the dignity and equality of all individuals in Bulgaria.

Speaker biography:

Deyana Marcheva is an Associate Professor of Constitutional Law and Human Rights at New Bulgarian University. Her research and academic interests primarily focus on the rights of vulnerable persons, including children, refugees, and the LGBTI people. In addition to her academic work, Deyana Marcheva is a practicing lawyer and a member of the Sofia Bar Association.



Session 1, Panel 3: Gendered experiences of hate (1)

Instrumentalizing Anti-LGBT Sentiment: The Impact of “LGBT-Free Zones” in Poland

Dr Ewa Milczarek

University Of Szczecin, Szczecin, Poland

The speech examines the emergence and diffusion of “LGBT-free zones” in Poland as a strategic instrument of illiberal politics and cultural polarization. Beginning in 2019, dozens of local governments adopted declarations modelled on conservative templates, symbolically positioning their territories as hostile to so-called “LGBT ideology.” Although non-binding, these resolutions served as powerful tools of political signalling, reinforcing a binary moral narrative and legitimizing exclusionary attitudes toward sexual and gender minorities at the local level.

The paper assesses the multilayered consequences of these declarations: the escalation of hate speech in public spaces, deterioration of safety and mental well-being among LGBT residents, increased barriers to legal protection, as well as wider social fragmentation documented in national and European studies. Empirical studies show that the enactment of anti-LGBT measures correlated with a 16% rise in annual suicide attempts ($\approx$ five per 100,000).

Ultimately, the purpose of this presentation is to demonstrate how domestic law and political strategies can directly shape the lived experience, safety, and dignity of individuals, and how profoundly public rhetoric influences social attitudes and institutional responses. The case of LGBT persons in Poland serves as a critical example of how legal symbolism and political discourse can be weaponised against minority groups, with far-reaching human consequences. Recognising this dynamic is essential not only for understanding current developments in Poland, but also for preventing similar tactics from being deployed against any vulnerable community elsewhere.



Biography:

Dr Ewa Milczarek is a Polish legal scholar at the University of Szczecin, Faculty of Law and Administration. She earned her doctoral degree in 2019 in the field of legal sciences. Her most important publication areas include: the protection of freedom of speech in the context of hate speech, digital content regulation, minority rights, and human rights instruments in Europe. She has published numerous scholarly works on the relationship between freedom of speech and hate speech, including analyses of Polish and European standards of protection against hate crimes. Her research findings have also been presented in expert reports, comparative analyses, and recommendations for public institutions. Her activities include international collaboration with research centers specializing in hate speech, digital regulation, and human rights standards. She has participated in a number of international projects funded by the International Visegrad Fund and the European Commission, including the Visegrad Alliance for Digital Rights and Disinformation Defense, where she is responsible for the Polish research component, and projects such as Common Identity – Common Future and Legal Challenges in the Digital Era. Previously, she also worked as a research team member on European Commission projects on countering gender-based violence and new psychoactive substances (including JUST/2012/DAP/AG/3531 and JUST/2013/ISEC/DRUGS/AG/6429).

She serves as an expert of the European Commission in the evaluation of Horizon Europe proposals (EACEA/B/04, 2023) and an expert of the European Parliamentary Research Service at the European Parliament (2025–2030).



Session 1, Panel 3: Gendered experiences of hate (1)

Online Gender-Based Violence Against Female Journalists in Ethiopia: Patterns, Responses, and Implications

Dr Muluken Asegidew Chekol

Northumbria University, Newcastle, UK

This article explores the prevalence, patterns, and implications of online gender-based violence (GBV) against female journalists in Ethiopia. It examines both individual experiences and systemic responses to digital misogyny using the 7Ps model — Prevalence, Prevention, Protection, Prosecution, Provision of Services, Partnerships, and Policies frameworks. Data was collected using a quantitative approach, with a self-administered questionnaire comprising both closed- and open-ended questions. A total of 73 female journalists responded to the questionnaire. Findings reveal widespread exposure to online harassment, including sexualized insults, offensive comments, sexualized memes, and threats, disproportionately affecting early-career journalists and those in highly visible media outlets such as TV and digital media. Institutional responses within media organizations remain fragmented, characterized by a lack of clear policies, limited protective measures, minimal psychosocial or legal support, and weak inter-institutional collaboration. This demonstrates, online GBV has profound professional consequences, including self-censorship, avoidance of reporting on specific issues, reduced digital participation, and the exclusion of women from hard-news reporting. The article also highlights online GBV as both a gender-equality concern and a media-freedom issue, emphasizing the urgent need for coordinated reforms across legal, institutional, and policy frameworks in Ethiopia.

Speaker biography:

I hold a PhD in Media and Communication, with research expertise in journalism, media ethics, conflict reporting, media and gender, and the impacts of digital media, particularly in the Global South. I am currently a Postdoctoral Visiting Research Fellow at Northumbria University, where my research examines the implications of digital media for human rights-related issues, including gender-based violence, freedom of



expression, public justice, asylum seekers, and migration. In addition, I have served as an Assistant Professor of Media and Communication at Debre Markos University, teaching courses at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

In 2019, I authored an academic book in the Amharic language titled *Journalism and Communication*. In 2023, I contributed a book chapter, *Ethiopian Socio-Political Contexts for Hate Speech*, to the edited volume *Hate Speech on Social Media: A Global Approach*. My peer-reviewed publications primarily examine Ethiopian media operating within highly politicized and conflict-affected environments.

Alongside my research and teaching, I held academic administrative positions, including Head of Department and Director of Public and International Relations at Dilla University. I also have practical media experience as a volunteer community radio producer at FM 97.7 and as a digital media content editor at Harmony Tube. In addition, I have been a member of some professional associations in Ethiopia, including the Online Media Association, the Coalition for Safety and Security of Journalists, and the Amhara Region Media and Journalists Association.

I have presented my research at international conferences, including the Journalists' Safety Conference at Oslo Metropolitan University in November 2025 and the International Art, Media, and Culture Research Conference in Barcelona in October 2025. I have also received funding awards from the British Academy, as well as the Northumbria University Race & Migration IDRT Seed-Corn Fund for my project in 2025/26.



Session 1, Panel 3: Gendered experiences of hate (1)

Transphobic hate crime & manifestations of hate speech: the murder of Cuban trans woman by Bangladeshi man in Greece

Dr Dimitra Filippou

National & Kapodistrian University of Athens, Alimos, Greece

The topic of this research is the study of a transphobic hate crime and the manifestations of hate speech through the case study of the murder of a Cuban transgender woman, Anna Ivankova, by a Bangladeshi man in Greece. In July 2023, she was murdered in her apartment in central Athens by a 35-year-old Bangladeshi man. Transphobic discourse on social media has been extensively examined in recent years due to the increasing use of offensive and aggressive language (Chakravarthi, 2023). Using sociopragmatic tools and methodology, this study collects linguistic data on how the Greek internet community has positioned itself regarding this transphobic hate crime. Specifically, it examines online positionings that contain hate speech directed at the deceased victim. The research integrates intersectional perspectives, explores human rights violations even after judicial intervention, and analyses representations of trans people through the lens of hate speech against the transgender victim. The context in which hate speech emerges is characterized by the use of abusive language, insults and threats (Knoblock, 2022). Our findings indicate that hate speech is deeply embedded in society and often accompanies the speakers' offensive and aggressive positionings toward the victim as in the following example: Get out of here with the pervert, we've cleaned up a bit, one less. These beings can't control their natural instincts and sometimes extreme abnormalities have consequences. Such examples are analysed to highlight the relationship between transphobic hate crime and hate speech, the strategies through which they are enacted, and the sociopragmatic features that link these two phenomena.

Chakravarthi, B. R. (2023). Detection of homophobia and transphobia in YouTube comments. *International Journal of Data Science and Analytics*, 1-20.



Knoblock, N. (Ed.). (2022). *The Grammar of Hate: Morphosyntactic Features of Hateful, Aggressive, and Dehumanizing Discourse*. Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press.

Speaker biography:

Dimitra Filippou is a linguist and adjunct lecturer at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, where she teaches undergraduate and postgraduate courses in sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, digital communication, and hate speech. She holds a PhD in Pragmatics and Discourse Analysis, an MSc in International Negotiations and an MA in Theoretical & Applied Linguistics with research spanning sociopragmatics, linguistic impoliteness, hate speech, hate crime, and identity construction in conflictual discourse. Her work focuses on online aggression, transphobic and gendered hate speech, and the links between language, ideology, and power. She has published in international journals and edited volumes and has conducted funded research supported by the Societas Linguistica Europaea.



Session 1, Panel 3: Gendered experiences of hate (1)

Gendered Hate in Digital Ecosystems: Evidence from the Italian Manosphere

Prof Giovanna Vingelli

Università Della Calabria, Rende, Italy

In recent years, the manosphere has consolidated in Italy as a fragmented yet interconnected digital ecosystem, spanning Telegram channels, YouTube accounts, Instagram and TikTok profiles, forums and comment sections, where anti-feminist and misogynistic narratives circulate with increasing visibility. Drawing on an empirical qualitative analysis of selected Italian manosphere spaces, this paper examines how gender-based hostility is constructed, legitimised and normalised in online interactions.

The study is based on a corpus of digital materials collected between 2022 and 2025, including posts, videos, memes and comment threads from prominent Italian manosphere communities. Using thematic and discourse analysis, the paper identifies recurring narrative frames such as perceived male victimhood, resentment towards gender equality policies, delegitimation of feminist movements and anti-violence institutions, and the normalisation of harassment as a form of political expression. Particular attention is paid to the linguistic and visual strategies through which discriminatory speech is rendered banal, ironic or allegedly “common-sense”, blurring the boundary between lawful expression and harmful conduct.

Empirical findings show that, while explicit incitement to violence remains marginal, misogynistic and dehumanising representations function as enabling conditions for broader climates of hostility against women, feminists and LGBTQIA+ persons. The Italian manosphere appears to operate along a continuum in which hate speech, symbolic violence and everyday harassment mutually reinforce each other, often intersecting with populist and anti-institutional discourses.



The paper argues that empirical analysis of the manosphere is crucial for understanding contemporary forms of gender-based hate in digital environments. It concludes by highlighting the need for integrated responses that combine data collection, platform responsibility, preventive education and institutional trust-building, in order to address online misogyny without undermining freedom of expression or democratic pluralism.

Speaker biography:

Giovanna Vingelli (she/her) holds a PhD from the University of Calabria (2004). She is a feminist sociologist and Senior Researcher and Assistant Professor of Gender Studies at the University of Calabria (Italy), where she also serves as Rector's Delegate for Gender Equality Policies and Director of the Centre for Women's Studies. Her research focuses on the analysis, design and implementation of gender equality policies—including gender mainstreaming, gender budgeting and gender education—as well as on gender-based violence and social movements. Her most recent work examines anti-feminist movements in Italy, with particular attention to their discourses, strategies and connections with the Italian and transnational far right.



Session 1, Panel 4: Preventing hate (1)

Building an Empathy Surplus in the European Union

Chuck Watts

Empathy Surplus Project Foundation, Wilmington, United States

The human brain is a biased and moral organ focused on the well-being of its host. The brain's biases of care or cruelty can be physically strengthened or weakened through language and experience. Foundational to science-based communication to mold public thinking is [1] saying what you want, [2] why you want it, and [3] repeatedly. My Empathy Surplus Project Foundation is a 501(c)(3) member-driven, science-based communication education collective. While I am not a cognitive scientist, I share what I have learned since 2004 from speaking with and studying the writings of my friend and mentor, Dr George Lakoff, UC Berkeley, California USA.

If accepted, my paper will encourage the Council of Europe to consider how to cultivate empathy and mutual responsibility within its shared population rather than studying hate. Of course, hate and our current international empathy deficit are the context for why the Council of Europe should shift its focus of study.

All laws, rules, policies, etc, have two brain components: the material nuts and bolts and the cognitive moral why. The cognitive moral why of the UDHR is found in the Preamble and Articles 1, 2, 28-30. The nuts-and-bolts of the UDHR are found in Articles 2-27. We all have a duty to care for humanity's human rights and freedoms. Billionaires need culture war, hate speech, and hate crimes to govern discourse. Humanity needs culture diplomacy, caring speech, and a caring society to govern discourse.

My paper will encourage conference attendees to consider shifting their focus to the study of what we want, a caring society, and why we want a caring society, so humanity's human rights and freedoms are protected and expanded.



Speaker biography:

The Rev. Charles M. Watts, MDiv, is the founder and CEO of the Empathy Surplus Project Foundation. Chuck discovered science-based communication education with cognitive scientist Dr. George Lakoff in 2004. He joined Lakoff's Rockridge Nation online community board of advisors in 2005 to help centralize empathy in ongoing public discourse on all human rights issues. When Rockridge closed, Chuck pivoted to continue Lakoff's mission, funded from the bottom up. His Empathy Surplus Campaign, launched in 2009, is now Empathy Surplus Project Foundation DBA Empathy Surplus Network USA. Chuck earned his business degree from Mississippi State University in 1972 and his Master of Divinity (MDiv) degree from the University of the South (also known as Sewanee) in 1977. A social entrepreneur at heart and active in the public square, Chuck established an Episcopal Church in Mississippi and a clothing bank and Rotary Club in Ohio. He's been a Rotarian since 1981. A financial advisor and limited partner with Edward Jones for 30 years, he helped launch more than 20 branches. He and his wife split their time between Wilmington and Dayton, Ohio. Email him at chuck@empathysurplus.com or call him at 1-833-672-8487 ext 700. Find him on Bluesky @chuckwatts.bsky.social.



Session 1, Panel 4: Preventing Hate (1)

Hot and Cold: Can increasing cognitive flexibility decrease inter-group hatred?

Dr Arun Bokde, Dr Jan de Vries, Dr Simon McCarthy-Jones

Trinity College Dublin, Dublin, Ireland

Hatred has long been among the most destructive affective forces in human societies requiring mitigation. The Council of Europe (CM/Rec(2022)16 on combatting hate speech) has highlighted education, training, and public awareness as central tools for reducing the prevalence and impact of hatred. A critical component of such initiatives will be addressing the ‘cold’ cognitive mechanisms that contribute to the emergence and persistence of hot hateful affective states. This paper examines cognitive inflexibility (CI) as one such mechanism and proposes that reducing CI may be a fruitful target for hate-reduction programmes. Cognitive inflexibility (difficulty shifting between mental sets, rules, or perspectives) has been linked to rigid categorical thinking and resistance to new information. Empirical evidence demonstrates that CI predicts increased willingness to endorse violent defences of the in-group and self-sacrifice for collective causes, relationships that are mediated by strong ideological attachment to one’s group or nation. Individuals high in CI tend to fuse their personal identity with their group identity, creating a cognitive foundation for “hot” intergroup hatred rooted in “cold,” emotionally neutral information-processing biases. Interventions that enhance cognitive flexibility may therefore reduce susceptibility to hateful ideologies and enhance effectiveness of decreasing hate in a person. Engaging individuals in creative activities, collaborative problem-solving, role-play, and games can strengthen executive functions such as planning, impulse control, and perspective shifting, all skills associated with greater openness and reduced rigid thinking. Moreover, societal structures and cultural norms can embed CI at a collective level. Effective hate-reduction strategies must therefore operate across both individual and societal domains. This paper will propose a multilevel framework that integrates cognitive-flexibility training with broader educational and cultural reforms aimed at fostering adaptability, trust, and nuanced social understanding, to mitigate the problem of hate.



Speaker biographies:

Arun Bokde is Associate Professor in the School of Medicine and Institute of Neuroscience at Trinity College Dublin. He is leading research on the neurological basis of strong negative emotions such as hate and he has been the coordinator for the MSCA-ITN NETHATE Consortium.

Jan de Vries is an Associate Professor who specialises in psychology of health, cognitive dissonance research, stress management, cognitive neuroscience, and social psychology. He has coordinated, and evaluated an extensive programme of dialogue, healing and reconciliation at the Glencree Centre of Peace and Reconciliation. He led a research programme on cognitive dissonance, hate and reconciliation within the MSCA-ITN NETHATE Consortium.

Simon McCarthy-Jones is Associate Professor in Clinical Psychology and Neuropsychology in the Department of Psychiatry at Trinity College Dublin. He was a member of the MSCA-ITN NETHATE Consortium. His research focuses on hallucinations, child abuse and freedom of thought. In the area of child abuse, he focuses on prevention, the potential physical and mental health consequences of such abuse, and the role of shame. On the right to freedom of thought, he is interested in the challenges posed by new technology and how behavioural science insights can be used to support, not undermine, such freedom.



Session 1, Panel 4: Preventing Hate (1)

The Foundations of Modern Society: Reclaiming Universal Values through Education for Democratic Culture in the Real, Digital, and AI-Mediated World

Violeta Vlajkovic Bojic, Zlatko Grusanovic

This paper introduces a multi-layered model for education for democratic culture, aimed at reclaiming universal values in real, digital, and AI-mediated environments. It explores how values are operationalized across different levels of the education system, from policy and curriculum to classroom practice. The presentation emphasizes the central role of teachers as key agents in translating values into lived learning experiences and highlights the importance of integrating cognitive, social, and ethical dimensions of learning. It also outlines practical implications for developing democratic competences, critical thinking, and ethical resilience in the context of rapid technological change.

Speaker biographies:

Violeta Vlajkovic Bojic, MA, is Head of the Department for National Minorities at the Institute for the Improvement of Education (IIE), Serbia. She is a senior education professional with extensive experience in education policy, curriculum development, and inclusive education. Her expertise includes education for democratic culture, human rights and minority rights, global citizenship education (GCED), critical thinking, and media literacy. She has collaborated with the Council of Europe, UNICEF, and IOM on initiatives related to democratic participation, migration, and inclusive schooling.

Zlatko Grusanovic, PhD, is Director of the Institute for the Improvement of Education (IIE), Serbia. A former Serbian language teacher and school principal, he is a senior education leader engaged in education policy, digital transformation, and democratic citizenship education. He has contributed to national and international initiatives on digital citizenship, artificial intelligence in education, the prevention of violence and hate speech, and Holocaust education, in collaboration with the Council of Europe, UNESCO, and EU programs.



Session 1, Panel 5: Representations of hate

The Problem of Enduring Symbols of Hate

Robert Tynes

Bard College, Tivoli, United States

The Nazis swastika is one of the most enduring, internationally recognized symbols of hate. Pepe the Frog is one of the more recognizable hate memes across the internet. Pictures of the Ku Klux Klan white hood epitomize the brutal dehumanization of blacks in the United States. Despite efforts to denounce, or deem illegal, these symbols of hate persist. This paper examines questions concerning hate symbols: Why do they endure? What are the mechanisms involved? How do they endure? How can we defuse and deflate these symbols?

Counterspeech has become an effective tool against traditional hate speech (e.g., Buerger 2020; Hangartner et al 2021; Munger 2017), but not much work has examined enduring hate symbols, such as the swastika and the noose. The main focus has been on words and online text, which is important. However, symbols of hate, pictures and drawings, are different, and possibly more powerful, especially when the symbols enter the sign system of myth (Barthes 2013). When a symbol, any symbol, attaches to myth, it can become historically intractable—there is no getting rid of it.

There are strategies, though, that we can take to lessen the harms. Past work on counterspeech (Benesch et al., 2016; Briggs and Feve, 2013) has provided several techniques, including humor, education, empathy, and shaming. These approaches complement other strategies from the field of political science used to combat state violence, most notably Gene Sharp's theories (1973) on nonviolent political conflict. The goal is to decrease the threat evoked. These are valuable, reactive, defensive postures. As a community against hate, though, we should strategize and generate more active, pro-humanization symbols that could also enter sign systems of myth. The peace symbol of the 1960s is one example to consider, as is the confrontation of police by protesters with flowers during the Velvet Revolution.



Speaker biography:

Robert Tynes, Ph.D., is a political scientist whose research focuses on child soldiers, African politics, online activism, hate as a political dynamic, and the effects of college-in-prison. His book, "Tools of War, Tools of State", examines how governments and opposing forces utilize children as a tactical innovation in conflict. Tynes is Director of College-in-Prison Operations for the Bard Prison Initiative (BPI) and a member of the faculty for BPI and Bard College's Master of Arts in Teaching program.



Session 1, Panel 5: Representations of hate

Unmasking Code-Mixed Bengali Memes: A Hierarchical Multimodal Hate Detector Beyond the Surface

Suzad Mohammad^{1,2,3}, Md Saimul Haque Shanto², Md Samiur Rahman³, Shamima Akter Eti³, Naeem Mia³, Sadia Sharmin²

¹University Of Limerick, ²Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology,

³International University of Business Agriculture and Technology

The proliferate use of social media in the globe, specially among Bengali-speaking communities (7th most spoken language) has amplified multimodal, code-mixed (Bengali–English) memes as a vehicle of humor and commentary, but also as carriers of hatred and discrimination. Unimodal moderation fails to capture the interplay between image and caption, and prior works mostly stop at binary hate vs. non-hate, without exposing what kind of aggression is present or who/what is being targeted. This gap undermines practical content moderation at scale. Our work addresses this with a code-mixed, multimodal pipeline that not only flags hateful memes but also reveals their domain (e.g., gender, political, religious) and the intended target (e.g., individual, organization, community, society). For further clarity, inclusion of XAI (Lime) identifies the part of the image and text accountable for such classification of hate or non-hate.

Understanding hateful meme communication in low-resource, code-mixed communities is critical for designing transparent, human-centered moderation interfaces and fostering inclusive and safer online environments. Our work, therefore, situates multimodal hate detection as an HCI problem of human–AI collaboration, focusing on interpretability, explainability, and cultural sensitivity within Bengali-speaking digital spaces.

Speaker biography:

Suzad Mohammad is a PhD student in the Department of Physics at the University of Limerick. He is also involved with diverse research groups, specially in Human-Computer Interaction domain across reputed universities like BUET, IUBAT from



Bangladesh. Currently his research focus is on computational modeling of crystals and crystallographic analysis.



Session 1, Panel 5: Representations of hate

When Inaction Hurts: Social Norms and the Public Meaning of Hate Speech

Dr Jimena Zapata¹, Dr Ana Isabel Leal Lobato²

¹Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, Munich, Germany, ²Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark

Public hate speech is not merely an individual act but a social event in shared spaces. The harm it causes depends on what is said and how others react. This paper examines how bystander behaviour and the social norms it expresses shape perceptions of hate speech harms, with important implications for human rights and democracy.

Drawing on experimental moral philosophy, social norm theory, and the philosophy of action, we report findings from two empirical studies with Spanish participants. These replicate and extend a recent UK-based investigation, allowing a cross-cultural assessment of how socio-normative contexts influence judgements of harm, responsibility, and complicity in hate speech incidents.

In the first experiment, participants viewed visual stories showing public racist hate speech with differing bystander groups. We varied both the number of bystanders and their reactions—silence or speaking out. A single bystander's response did not alter perceived harm, but group silence amplified it. When some or most bystanders spoke out, perceived harm decreased, though blame for the perpetrator remained high. Silence was often seen as implicit support: the more silent bystanders, the more participants perceived the perpetrator as having supporters.

The second experiment examined how people judged individual actions across group settings. Speaking out reduced perceived harm most when it challenged group silence, highlighting dissent as democratic solidarity. The largest reduction in harm occurred when the majority opposed hate speech, suggesting harm depends on group norms, not just the number who speak out.



A qualitative follow-up found that participants interpreted silence and opposition through civic duty, collective responsibility, and democratic values. Overall, the results show that inaction in the face of hate speech is not neutral, but a socially meaningful stance that can reinforce harm or signal resistance. These findings are relevant for hate speech theory, public policy, and efforts to strengthen democratic norms.

Speaker biographies:

Jimena Zapata is a lawyer and postdoctoral researcher at the Chair of Philosophy of Mind and the Cognition, Values, and Behaviour Research Group (Mi3 Lab) at LMU Munich. She recently completed her PhD in Philosophy through a bi-national cotutelle programme between LMU Munich and the University of Granada and has a multidisciplinary background in the humanities, linguistics, and public policy. Her research lies at the intersection of philosophy of mind, language, and moral psychology, focusing on the mechanisms of harm in public communication and how individual and collective responses shape the social and moral meaning of hate speech.

Ana Isabel Leal Lobato is a conference interpreter, translator, and intercultural trainer with a PhD in Language Interpretation and Translation from Aarhus University. She has an academic background in multilingual communication and extensive professional experience in high-level institutional and international settings. Her work focuses on intercultural mediation, linguistic ethics, and the role of language professionals in facilitating understanding across cultural and political contexts. Alongside her professional practice, she engages in research on communication, social norms, and the impact of language on public discourse. Her expertise bridges applied linguistics, intercultural training, and broader debates on language, social norms, and democratic engagement.



Session 1, Panel 5: Representations of hate

Othered at First Sight: Lookism, Ableism, and the Aesthetics of Exclusion

ellen stohl

California State University, Northridge, Northridge, United States

This paper argues that lookism is not a superficial concern with beauty but a central technology of ableist social control that fuels and legitimizes hate. Lookism translates aesthetic judgments about bodies and behavior into legal, economic, and interpersonal exclusions, shaping who is deemed “employable,” “credible,” “respectable,” or even “human enough” to deserve protection and care. Building on Talila A. Lewis’s definition of ableism as a system that assigns value to bodies and minds based on norms of normalcy, productivity, desirability, and fitness, the paper distinguishes between ableism as a value system and disablism as the systemic discrimination that flows from ability-based judgments (Lewis, 2022; Wolbring, Dhaliwal, & Kaur, 2026).

Drawing on Jasmine E. Harris’s concepts of an “aesthetic baseline” and “disqualified bodies,” the paper shows how sensory markers of disability are read as deviations from a fictional neutral body and used to justify exclusion from work, education, healthcare, and media (Harris, 2019). It situates these dynamics within longer histories of aesthetic policing and eugenic regulation, including Ugly Laws and projects that targeted disabled and other marginalized bodies for elimination (Schweik, 2009; Garland-Thomson, 2002). The paper introduces the term “legislative eugenics” to describe how contemporary policies, standards, and appearance norms keep disabled people unseen or conditionally visible under the guise of neutrality, undermining the human-rights aims of anti-discrimination frameworks.

Combining feminist disability studies with personal narrative, the paper analyzes media representations, including Playboy and Apple’s disability marketing, to show how visibility often depends on aesthetic palatability, “beautyism,” and the management of non-disabled comfort (Cifuentes, 2025; Garland-Thomson, 2009). It argues that ableist aesthetic regimes normalize hate-motivated harassment and selective incivility toward



disabled people and outlines interventions that move from conditional inclusion to structural belonging, aligning disability justice with efforts to combat hate and protect democracy.

Speaker biography:

Ellen Stohl is a disability justice advocate, educator, and writer whose work centers on ableism, hate, and systemic exclusion. At California State University, Northridge, Ellen teaches/coordinates courses in Teacher Education and Disability Studies. She serves as Systems Coordinator for CSUN Explorers, a college program for students with intellectual disabilities. Ellen has contributed to national and international conversations on disability through media, lectures, and advocacy. Her work confronts ableism as a root system of oppression for all isms. She's received several awards, including the Disability Rights Legal Center's 2023 Chuck Siegel President's Award for advancing disability justice and meaningful inclusion.



Session 1, Panel 6: Hate and human rights

State-Driven Stigmatization as Hate Speech: Implications for European Human Rights Law and Strategic Litigation

Prof Dr Hüseyin Demir

Human Rights Defenders e.V., Berlin

Recent normative developments within the Council of Europe—specifically Committee of Ministers Recommendations CM/Rec(2022)16 on hate speech and CM/Rec(2024)4 on hate crime—signal a paradigm shift toward recognizing the structural and systemic dimensions of hate. While traditional legal analysis focuses on the state's role as a regulator of speech between private actors, this paper argues that state authorities can act as the primary producers and amplifiers of hate narratives, effectively utilizing "state-driven stigmatization" as a tool of political repression.

Drawing on critical discourse analysis and the provided sources, the paper examines how Turkish state authorities and a media ecosystem (90% of which is state-controlled) have constructed a "politics of difference". Through the use of over 240 unique derogatory phrases—including dehumanizing metaphors such as "virus," "vampire," and "hashashin"—state actors have successfully delegitimized the Gülen Movement, framing its members as an "existential threat" to justify mass purges and systemic rights violations.

The paper further analyzes the legal implications of these narratives under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). It demonstrates how such stigmatization triggers state responsibility not only under Article 10 (freedom of expression) but as a precursor to violations of Article 3 (prohibition of torture), Article 6 (right to a fair trial), and Article 8 (right to private life). This is supported by an analysis of international judicial decisions—including courts in the UK, Brazil, and Spain—which have rejected Turkish extradition requests by recognizing that state-led hate narratives create a "foreseeable risk" of persecution and judicial bias.



Finally, the paper explores how these evolving standards can be operationalized in strategic litigation and international advocacy. By reframing political repression through the lens of state-sponsored hate speech, this approach offers new avenues for holding governments accountable for the "in terrorem" effects of their rhetoric, which often culminate in physical hate crimes and crimes against humanity.

Speaker biography:

Prof Dr Hüseyin Demir is a jurist and academic working in international human rights law, with a particular focus on European Convention on Human Rights jurisprudence, Council of Europe supervisory mechanisms, and the rule of law in member states. He is the founding President of Human Rights Defenders e.V. (HRD), a Berlin-based non-profit advancing accountability for fundamental rights violations through advocacy directed at Council of Europe and European Union institutions.

He completed his PhD at the University of Leeds (2000), following an LLM at the University of Wales (1996) and a degree in political science and public administration from Ankara University (1991). His academic career includes positions as Associate Professor and Vice Dean of the Faculty of Administrative Sciences and Economics at Kırıkkale University, Head of the Department of Public Administration and Politics, and Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academics) at the University of Kigali, Rwanda. He has also taught at doctoral level at Turgut Özal University, Ankara. Between 2012 and 2016 he served in a senior policy role within the Turkish Ministry of Youth and Sports.

His current research engages with the structural dimensions of ECtHR jurisprudence on Articles 3, 6, 8 and 14 ECHR. His paper at this conference develops the concept of vertical hate speech as a framework for analysing state-driven stigmatisation under the Convention, drawing on the structural implications of recent Grand Chamber jurisprudence on Türkiye and on the comparative literature on autocratic legalism and democratic backsliding. Ongoing work also addresses Article 46 supervision practice and the implementation of pilot and quasi-pilot judgments in cases involving systemic rule-of-law failures.



He has a long record of civil society engagement across the United Kingdom, Turkey and Germany, including humanitarian and refugee-protection work in Berlin. He works in Turkish (native), English (advanced) and German (B2).



Session 1, Panel 6: Hate and human rights

“Are We Safe Here?” Migrant Women, Hate, and the Urgent Call for Action 25 Years After Durban

Dr Salome Mbugua

AkiDwA, Dublin, Ireland

Recent anti-immigrant riots in Dublin and across Ireland have reignited deep fears among migrant women and migrant communities, raising a pressing question: Are we safe here? These incidents expose the persistent undercurrent of racism, xenophobia, and gendered hate that continues to marginalize those already most vulnerable.

As the world approaches the 25th anniversary of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (DDPA) in 2026, this moment calls for reflection and renewed commitment. Despite the DDPA’s enduring relevance, there remains a profound lack of political will and coordinated state action to address hate, safeguard minority rights, and uphold human dignity.

Dr Salome’s presentation will center the lived experiences of migrant women in Ireland, drawing attention to how hate intersects with race, gender, and migration status. It will advocate for stronger political leadership, inclusive policymaking, and collective action among government, civil society, and affected communities. Only through genuine collaboration can we confront hate and build a society where every person regardless of origin can live with safety, respect, and belonging.

Speaker biography:

Dr Salome Mbugua is a researcher, gender equality activist, and human rights advocate. She is the CEO of AkiDwA – The Migrant Women’s Network Ireland. She also serves as a Human Rights Commissioner with the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission and was recently appointed by the UN Secretary-General as an Independent Eminent Expert to monitor the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. With over 20 years of experience in civil society, Dr Mbugua has dedicated her career to advocating for under-represented groups, particularly



women, children, and youth across Europe and Africa. Her work includes the development of education and awareness programmes, support, and advocacy programs, as well as collaborations with organisations to influence policy and drive systemic change. Dr Mbugua holds a Doctorate from Trinity College Dublin and a master's degree from University College Dublin.



Session 1, Panel 6: Hate and human rights

From Hate to Harmony: Formulating a pan-European approach to hate crime across the European human rights framework?

Natalie Gunthel

University Of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark

Over the past several decades, efforts to combat ‘hate crimes’ have become an increasingly prominent concern within the European human rights framework. The Council of Europe (CoE), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and the European Union (EU) have all made significant strides in addressing hate crimes as a shared European challenge, and a human rights issue in need of harmonious European-level responses. Yet, much like domestic state-level approaches, their initiatives have regularly been accused of being inefficient, ‘piecemeal,’ or even out of tune with Member State realities. Departing from such criticisms, this paper explores the European institutional endeavours of formulating a joint approach to hate crimes against the common backdrop of the pan-European human rights framework. It acknowledges that the three European institutions have each made valuable contributions in fostering a joint European understanding of the hate crime problem. However, the paper also excavates that the road to a more consolidated form of European harmony remains long and paved with many conceptual and practical gaps. In acknowledgement of such gaps, the paper suggests a revised critical assessment of the relationship between human rights protection and hate crime prevention in the European context.

Speaker biography:

Natalie Gunthel is a human rights lawyer and legal anthropologist at the Faculty of Law at the University of Copenhagen. Her research centers around challenges in formulating and implementing hate crime law and similar forms of legal responses within national, regional, and international legal frameworks. She has previously worked for the Danish Institute for Human Rights and the EU Delegation to the United Nations in New York.



Session 2, Panel 1

Identifying, Exposing and Transforming societal, institutional and policy responses to Hate Crime: British Society of Criminology Hate Crime Network Panel

Dr Jane Healy¹, Dr Ferhat Tura¹, Dr Amy Clarke², Ms Emily Wertans², Professor Jon Garland³, Alannah Graham⁴, Dr Maria Sapouna⁴, August Ramsay⁴

¹Bournemouth University, Bournemouth, United Kingdom, ²University of Leicester, Leicester, United Kingdom, ³University of Surrey, Guildford, United Kingdom, ⁴University of West of Scotland, Paisley, United Kingdom

This Discussion Panel by Hate Crime academics from the UK presents contemporary research on the extent of hate crime experiences using a variety of data collection methods.

Healy and Tura analysed five years of data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales using logistic intersectional Multilevel Analysis of Individual Heterogeneity and Discriminatory Accuracy (MAIHDA). Results showed that young disabled men and women are more likely to experience stranger, acquaintance and domestic violence, compared to non-disabled people.

Garland uses eight years Crime Survey for England and Wales data to disentangle the unique emotional impact of hate motivated violence. The results support the notion that hate hurts more for most protected groups, particularly for racist and homophobic violence and gender and disability-related vandalism.

Graham and Sapouna present focus group research on misogynistic hate speech online, considering men's perceptions of misogynistic memes in examining how men recognise and understand misogyny, how humour influences their perceptions, and their perspectives on potential legislation in a Scottish legal context.

Ramsay presents research using multi-modal Photovoice, focus groups and interviews to explore experiences of transphobia and transphobic hate crime, using participatory



methods and creative media. Findings illustrate the negative impact of transphobic hate crime in Scotland and barriers to reporting it.

Clarke and Wertans present the Centre for Hate Studies' Manifesto for Change, a ten-point, solution-led, empirically grounded framework for transforming societal, institutional and policy responses to hate crime. Drawing on a decade's worth of empirical research with victims, practitioners and policymakers, the Manifesto translates evidence on lived experience, reporting barriers and systemic failings into a set of actionable recommendations for reform.

The discussion panel presents the above papers as a shared conversation starter, seeking to encourage audience participation and discussion to strengthen prevention, protection and provision for victims of hate crimes.

Speaker biographies:

Dr Jane Healy is a Criminologist and Visiting Fellow at Bournemouth University.

Dr Ferhat Tura is Lecturer in Criminology at Bournemouth University.

Dr Amy Clarke is Deputy Director of the Centre for Hate Studies, University of Leicester.

Emily Wertans is Research Assistant and PGR Candidate at the Centre for Hate Studies, University of Leicester.

Professor Jon Garland is Professor of Criminology at University of Surrey.

Alannah Graham is PGR Candidate at University of the West of Scotland.

Dr Maria Sapouna is Senior Lecturer in the School of Education and Social Sciences, University of the West of Scotland.

August Ramsay is PGR Candidate at University of the West of Scotland.



Session 2, Panel 2: Experiencing Hate

Victim-centred, Comprehensive Approach to Hate Crime and Hate Speech: Recent Experience with Reflecting International Standards and Best Practices in Czechia

Dr Viktor Kunderák

Government Office of The Czech Republic, Praha, Czech Republic

Is a democracy only as strong as its ability to protect the most vulnerable members of society? And is a democratic state only as resilient as it can build upon — and nurture — the resilience of each individual under its jurisdiction? On the one hand, the international human rights order places the individual at its very centre. The guarantees developed by the European Court of Human Rights against bias-motivated violence — hate crime — form one of the key pillars of the Convention system in addressing discrimination, racism, xenophobia, antisemitism, and homophobia. On the other hand, both international and national policies have, for a long time, prioritised approaches in which victims are treated primarily as sources of evidence rather than as human beings in need of immediate care, recognition, and protection by the state.

This contribution will discuss how the framing of hate crimes and hate speech through anti-extremism policies has failed to capture their real nature and impact. By focusing on protecting democratic structures and public order, states overlook the multi-layered harm caused by prejudice-motivated violence and incitement — harm that extends beyond individual victims to entire communities through processes of othering, stigmatisation, and marginalisation on ethnic, religious, or gendered grounds. There is a pressing need to change the paradigm and introduce human-rights-based, victim-centred, and comprehensive policies that place victimised individuals at the very heart of state action. The presentation will explore the Strategic Recommendations adopted by the Czech Government in June 2025 as a case study of how international standards — such as the recent Council of Europe Recommendations on Hate Speech and Hate Crime — can serve as an impetus for this crucial paradigm shift.



Speaker biography:

Viktor Kunderák is an international human rights lawyer with more 15 years of experience. Viktor has previously worked for the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) as a as a Hate Crime Officer and a Senior Advisor on Freedom of Religion or Belief. He has trained hundreds of police officers, prosecutors, judges and civil society representatives on hate crimes, hate speech and intolerance, advised governments on hate crime legislation and policies and led ODIHR's Hate Crime Report, world's largest data set on hate crime. Since June 2023, Viktor has served as Head of Human Rights and Protection of Minorities Department at the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic where he led the process of developing the Strategic Recommendations on Addressing Hate Crime and Hate Speech Comprehensively, which were approved by the Czech Government in June 2025. Viktor represents Czechia in CoE's CDADI, where he was elected as vice-chair in November 2025.



Session 2, Panel 2: Experiencing Hate

Racist Hate Crime in Football

Dr Leon Moosavi

University Of Liverpool, School Of Law And Social Justice Building, United Kingdom

Stan Horne was a pioneering footballer who played for Aston Villa, Manchester City, and Fulham in the 1960s and 1970s. He is celebrated as the first black footballer to play for Manchester City and Fulham. This presentation provides an insight into the playing career of Stan Horne, particularly in relation to historical and contemporary questions about race, racism, and hate crime in football. It showcases how black footballers were treated in the 1960s and 1970s and generates awareness about what the implications of this are for the current period. Stan's resilient approach to dealing with racist hate crime and not letting it prevent him from finding success and joy in the game is also captured. This reveals a potentially inspirational strategy for resisting hate crime in football nowadays. This presentation gives an insight into the monumental changes that have occurred in football in recent decades, but it also demonstrates what has remained constant over time. Stan's unique story also shows how black footballers face other challenges alongside racist hate crime which are often overlooked. Finally, this presentation generates questions about the belief that continuous progress is being made in tackling hate crime in football. Instead, consideration is given as to whether complacency in tackling racism in football may result in racism in football becoming surprisingly worse today than it was in past eras.

Biography:

Dr Leon Moosavi is a sociologist of race and religion. Leon is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Sociology, Social Policy and Criminology at the University of Liverpool. Leon is also a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (Advance HE) and an Honorary Research Fellow in the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology at Stellenbosch University, South Africa. Leon is currently working on three projects. Firstly, he is writing a book about Muslim football fans in England, and what their experiences of football fandom tell us about identity, belonging, and marginalisation in



contemporary societies. This project relates to Leon's broader interest in racism in football. Secondly, he is co-coordinating a decolonial mentorship programme for 24 women scholars in Brazil and Indonesia which is funded by a large grant from The British Academy. Thirdly, he is co-writing a meta-analysis of race, racism, and anti-racism in the Liverpool City Region which is funded by a large grant from The Race Equality Hub.



Session 2, Panel 2: Experiencing Hate

Breathing Hate: Affective Atmospheres and the Embodied Experience of Prejudice

Prof Katie McBride, Prof Zoë James

University of Plymouth, Plymouth, United Kingdom

This paper examines how hate operates as affective atmosphere experienced on a continuum of lived experience. As such, it identifies hate as spatially distributed yet of indeterminate intensity, manifesting in the weight of hostile stares, the tension before entering certain spaces, and the visceral anticipation of harm, that presses upon and enters minoritised bodies. Drawing on Anderson's (2009) theorisation of atmospheres and Ahmed's (2004) affective economies, we argue that hate circulates as contagious feeling, transmitted through collective anxieties, viral social media content, and spatial practices of exclusion that accumulates as affective residue in particular bodies (the veiled woman, the visibly queer person, the Traveller), spaces (the Muslim neighbourhood post-attack, the unauthorised encampment), and historical moments (following terrorist incidents, during moral panics).

Building on Lewis's (2018) pioneering application of affective and atmospheric approaches to gendered violence, we extend this analytical framework into critical hate studies (James and McBride, 2021). Through consideration of empirical work, including a critical analysis of veiled Muslim women's navigation of public space (Zempi and Chakraborti, 2014), LGBTQ+ spatial negotiations of safety and danger (McBride, 2023; Browne et al., 2011), and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities' experiences of hostile environments (James, 2020; Greenfields and Ryder, 2012), we demonstrate how minoritised people develop embodied competencies, pre-cognitive vigilance, affective forecasting, and spatial survival strategies, for sensing and navigating threatening atmospheres that dominant groups never learn to read. This affective lens reveals how entire communities experience the ambient threat of hatred before, during, and beyond discrete incidents, challenging legal frameworks that privilege intention.



Speaker biographies:

Professor Katie McBride is Associate Professor in Criminology and Criminal Justice and Associate Head of the School of Society and Culture at the University of Plymouth (UK). She is also Co-Director of the International Network for Hate Studies. Katie's research utilises deep ethnographic participatory methods as a tool to redress the balance of power in research and academia. Her research has explored how adverse childhood experiences, communities of support and structures of governance have impacted on the lived experience of trans individuals.

She has published widely on the theorisation of hate and the lived experiences of trans people. Her book *Trans Individuals Lived Experiences of Harm: Gender, Identity and Recognition* (2023, Palgrave) challenges conventional understandings of anti-trans hate by offering a historically grounded theorisation, draws on narratives taken from older trans people whose voices are rarely heard and speaks to those interested in victimology, hate studies and trans studies especially.

Before joining academia, Katie was an equality and human rights practitioner working within the public and third sectors developing policy and practice designed to address inequalities and discrimination experienced by marginalised communities.

Dr Zoë James is full Professor of Criminology at the University of Plymouth, UK. Her key research interests lie in examining hate from a critical perspective with a particular focus on the harms of hate experienced by marginalised peoples. Zoë's research has explored how systemic inequalities in mobility, accommodation, policing, and planning have impacted the lived experiences of Gypsies, Travellers, and Roma. Zoë is a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences, and she sits on the Board of the International Network for Hate Studies. She has published and presented her work nationally and internationally. Zoë works with her colleague Dr Katie McBride to bridge criminological theory with real-world application through their consultancy practice [Loaftin: Research & Consultancy](#).



Session 2, Panel 3: The politics of hate

The impacts of harassment and hate on Sami politicians in Norway

Prof Tore Bjørgo¹, Mikkel Berg-Nordlie², Benedicte Nordahl Berntsen³

¹Center For Research On Extremism (c-rex), University Of Oslo, Asker, Norway

²NIBR, OsloMet, ³ Norwegian Police University College

Harassment and threats against politicians have negative impacts on democratic processes, making considerable proportions of politicians exposed to such harassment to restrict their willingness to speak out on controversial issues, or even to consider quitting politics. The Sami parliament is the main political institution representing the interests the largest ethnic minority in Norway. A recent survey among members of the Sami parliament and board members of the Sami political parties has documented that such hateful harassment has an even stronger negative impact on Sami politicians than among other categories of politicians. This paper will discuss what makes Sami politicians particularly impacted by hateful harassment.

Speaker biographies:

Dr Tore Bjørgo is the founding director of the Center for Research on Extremism (C-REX), professor at the University of Oslo, and adjunct professor at the Norwegian Police University College. He is currently leading a team researching hate crime in Norway, and also two linked project on threats and harassment against national and Sami politicians, respectively.

Mikkel Berg-Nordlie's work is focused on ethnic politics and -policy, especially that concerning indigenous peoples. He is currently involved in several projects about contemporary Sámi politics and policy in Finland, Norway, Russia and Sweden.

Benedicte Nordahl Berntsen is a PhD candidate in sociology at the Norwegian Police University College and the University of Oslo. She has done the statistics in this study.



Session 2, Panel 3: The politics of hate

Hate Speech and Minority Rights in Serbia: The Case of Minister Vulin

Ragmi Mustafi

University Of Tirana, 17520 Bujanovac, Serbia

This article critically examines the intersection of hate speech and minority rights in Serbia through the case of government minister Aleksandar Vulin. In 2019, Vulin repeatedly employed the derogatory term “Šiptar” to describe ethnic Albanians—a word widely recognized as a pejorative slur. The National Council of the Albanian National Minority pursued legal action against him for discrimination and hate speech, yet Serbian courts ultimately ruled in his favor, concluding that his remarks, though offensive, did not meet the legal threshold for hate speech.

The outcome of this case raises pressing questions about the adequacy of Serbia’s legal framework in protecting minority rights and curbing ethnically charged rhetoric. By situating the Vulin case within Serbia’s broader socio-political context—where anti-Albanian sentiment remains pervasive—this article analyzes the court’s reasoning alongside social science theories of “Othering.” It demonstrates how legal institutions can perpetuate majority dominance and how political and social pressures influence judicial decision-making.

We argue that the handling of this case reflects deeper systemic biases within Serbia’s legal and political structures. The analysis underscores the urgent need for strengthened legal and institutional safeguards to combat hate speech and protect minority communities, in alignment with democratic principles and Serbia’s international human rights obligations.

Biography:

Ragmi Mustafi is a PhD candidate in Social Sciences at the University of Tirana, where his research engages with identity formation, minority rights, and state–society relations in post-conflict settings, with a particular focus on the Western Balkans. He



holds a Master's degree in Sociology and a Bachelor's degree in Sociology and Law from the University of Prishtina.

His doctoral research examines the socio-political dynamics of the 2001 insurgency in the Preshevo Valley, conceptualizing it within broader theoretical frameworks of collective identity, political mobilization, and contested statehood. His work situates minority experiences at the intersection of institutional exclusion and identity negotiation, drawing on both empirical inquiry and critical theory.

In parallel with his academic work, Mustafi serves as Political Adviser to the Prime Minister of the Republic of Kosovo, where he contributes to policy formulation concerning minority rights, cross-border governance, and regional cooperation. From 2018 to 2023, he was President of the Albanian National Minority Council in Serbia, the legally recognized body representing the Albanian minority, where he engaged in advocacy related to education, linguistic rights, and political representation.

His research and policy engagement address issues such as administrative marginalization, including the practice known as “passivisation of addresses,” and the non-recognition of academic qualifications, situating these within broader debates on structural inequality and legal pluralism. Mustafi has contributed to policy-oriented and analytical publications on minority rights and governance in Southeast Europe and has participated in international academic and policy forums on human rights, European integration, and conflict transformation.



Session 2, Panel 3: The politics of hate

Genocide and hate crime: Exploring hate offending through an alternative lens

William Bergstroem

University Of Surrey, Guildford, United Kingdom

This paper proposes a new and alternative lens through which to explore the topic of hate crime. The paper presents a practical application of existing key theories and models related to hate crime offending, while providing a novel analysis of such behaviours by placing these within the context of a continuum of hate, culminating in genocide. Often considered inherently separate offences due to their respective nature and scale, hate crime and genocide have historically largely been considered in isolation, with limited recognition of the potential shared learning from the respective fields. This paper follows an interdisciplinary approach to the two concepts and demonstrates the benefit of such approaches to the understanding of hate crime offending. By doing so, the paper outlines a broader application of existing explanations of hate crime offending and provides a new understanding of such behaviours.

Biography:

William Bergstroem has worked for several police services within the UK with a focus on working with seldom-heard and under-represented communities. William has a particular interest and considerable experience working within the areas of hate crime, community tensions and community cohesion. He also has an academic background in criminology and criminal justice, with a specialism in hate crime. William is currently undertaking a PhD exploring the relationship between hate crime and genocide.



Session 2, Panel 3: The politics of hate

Exonationalism – Imperialism Reborn: International influences on populist nationalism, The case of Ireland.

Dr Lindsey Garratt

University of Limerick, Ireland

This paper introduces the concept of ‘Exonationalism’ an oxymoronic term that seeks to highlight the external links of ‘internal’ right-wing nationalism. The paper emphasises the paradox of movements that seek legitimisation through recourse to nationalism, while relying on international rhetoric and support. Using the Republic of Ireland as a case study this paper traces international influences from the foundations of the State to the present. We aim to disrupt claims of nationalism as an internal phenomenon, by exploring how far-right movements that lay claim to Irish nationalism are influenced by transnational forces. We examine how these movements leverage nationalist rhetoric and symbolism to mobilize support and legitimise their ideologies. Drawing on theories of populism, expansionism and political sociology, this paper challenges the notion – leveraged by the far right - of nationalism as grassroots and the pure will of the people. Here we assert the value of interrogating far-right nationalism to expose the multitude of external forces that shape it, particularly in the age of social media. In doing so, we trace the contradictions inherent in exclusionary constructions of national identity. An examination of the literature on nationalism has led us to coin the term ‘exonationalism’ as way to describe the external support and structuring of far-right nationalism. We argue a new vocabulary is required to capture the fast-moving exchange of ideas and support far-right groups give each other, while also making moral claims of representing the true voice of the people. We finish by defining exonationalism as a form of imperialism, an entitlement far right nationalists have developed to define people’s will, and police identity across borders.

Speaker biography:

Dr Lindsey Garratt is an Associate Professor of Sociology, in University of Limerick, she was previously a Senior Lecturer in Education in Manchester Metropolitan University



and a Post-Doctoral Research Fellow in the ESRC Centre on Dynamics of Ethnicity (CoDE).

Her work focuses on understanding inequality through an intersectional approach, acknowledging not only socio-economic barriers but also racism, migration status, life-course and gender, especially in relation to youth and conceptions of childhood and adolescence. She is a scholar of psycho-social attributes such as authenticity, resilience and reflectivity as they are applied to policy.

She is currently developing the project Gender Turn, which looks at gendered turning points over the life course, using time use data and policy analysis, in partnership with Dr Emily Murphy and colleagues in École Normale supérieure and Nantes Université in France.

She is also developing the Migration and Families Network, in conjunction with Manchester Metropolitan University and Plymouth University. The network brings together academics and policy makers to examine policy and law reform in the U.K and Europe as it relates to families and migration.



Session 2, Panel 4: Preventing hate (2)

Breaking the Loneliness-Hate Pipeline: Evidence-Based Youth Work Responses

Dr Eeva Sinisalo-Juha

Humak, Helsinki, Finland

This presentation examines how youth work grounded in human rights education can prevent polarisation and hate by addressing youth loneliness and social exclusion.

Drawing on extensive research with over 14,900 young people (Kentauri survey) and 40 years of youth work expertise, I demonstrate the critical connection between social isolation, narrowed identity horizons, and vulnerability to radicalisation.

Our data reveals that 26% of Finnish youth experience loneliness, with significantly higher rates among gender minorities (40-52%). Longitudinal studies show lonely youth demonstrate diminished belief in their future prospects, reduced workplace confidence, and increased fear of adult responsibilities—factors that create fertile ground for extremist recruitment and hate mobilisation.

However, evidence from the “Youth Guarantee House” model and multiple intervention studies demonstrates that low-threshold youth work successfully combats exclusion.

The model's core principles—encountering youth as potentials rather than problems, building trust through long-term engagement, and creating spaces for genuine participation—have proven effective in reaching the most marginalised youth.

Contrary to stereotypes, our research on digital youth communities and gaming reveals these environments can provide protective factors against loneliness when properly understood and engaged. Youth work organisations complement public services by offering flexible, rights-based approaches that meet young people where they are.

My doctoral research on youth workers as human rights educators establishes the theoretical foundation: supporting adolescent identity development and agency through informal pedagogical interventions creates resilience against polarising narratives. PAR methodology specifically empowers marginalised youth by validating their voices and enabling collective action on issues affecting their lives.



This presentation offers actionable proposals for preventing hate through early intervention, multi-sectoral collaboration, and investment in youth work capacity. By addressing loneliness and exclusion before radicalisation occurs, we strengthen both individual wellbeing and democratic foundations.

Biography:

Dr Eeva Sinisalo-Juha is Principal Researcher at Humak University of Applied Sciences and Senior Expert at the Centre of Expertise for Equal Youth in Finland. With a doctorate in Social Sciences (2024) and over 40 years of youth work experience, her research focuses on human rights education, participatory action research, and supporting marginalized youth. Dr Sinisalo-Juha developed the Youth Guarantee House model for vulnerable young people, created a human rights education curriculum for Humak's community educator program, and participated e.g. in the five-country European Impact of Youth Work study. Her work bridges academic research and practical youth work implementation.



Session 2, Panel 4: Preventing hate (2)

The Consultation Black Box: Tracing Public Input in Ireland's Hate Speech–Hate Crime Reform

Dr Luke Danagher, Prof Jennifer Schweppe
University of Limerick, Ireland

This paper examines what public consultation actually does in criminal justice law reform, using Ireland's "Hate Speech" public consultation (2019–2020) and the pathway to the Criminal Justice (Hate Offences) Act 2024 as a case study. Drawing on a multi-strand Freedom of Information (FOI) research design, we trace how consultation inputs were recorded, analysed, and represented within the Department of Justice. We focus on the consultation's four strands (survey, written submissions, workshops, and comparative research) and assess what documentary evidence exists of "conscientious consideration" of responses. While the consultation was presented as extensive and evidence-informed, the FOI record trail reveals significant asymmetries: extensive internal documentation existed for parts of the survey analysis, but equivalent records were not available for written submissions and key "open" responses. We argue that this documentation gap matters because consultation is routinely invoked as an evidential and legitimating basis for legal change. The paper also analyses a second dynamic: the consultation was launched as hate speech-focused yet later narrated as informing hate crime reform, raising questions about scope, informational adequacy, and retrospective legitimation. We conclude by proposing practical accountability standards for consultation in rights-sensitive criminal justice reforms: clear scoping, transparent analytic protocols, and auditable reporting capable of sustaining public trust.

Speaker biographies:

Dr Luke Danagher is a legal academic at the University of Limerick and a researcher with the European Centre for the Study of Hate. His research centres on hate crime and hate speech, with a focus on criminalisation and the principles that should constrain it, the design and implementation of hate crime legislation, and the legitimacy of law



reform processes. He has particular interest in how evidence, consultation, and civil society advocacy shape legislative outcomes, and in the procedural standards that should govern criminal justice policymaking where reforms affect minoritised communities. His work combines doctrinal analysis with socio-legal attention to institutions, policy narratives, and the practical operation of criminal law.

Prof Jennifer Schweppe is Professor of Law at the University of Limerick and Director of the European Centre for the Study of Hate. Her research examines hate crime and hate speech, focusing on how criminal law and criminal justice institutions define, evidence, and respond to bias-motivated offending. She writes on criminalisation and sentencing, legislative design (including aggravated offences and protected grounds), and the practical challenges of implementation across policing, prosecution, and the courts. She publishes widely and contributes regularly to national and international policy discussions on building effective, rights-based responses to hate-related offending.



Session 2, Panel 4: Preventing hate (2)

Networking to fight underreporting in hate crimes. The Zero Hate Network

Marina González

Columbares, Beniaján, Murcia, Spain

The underreporting of hate crimes remains one of the most significant obstacles to the effective protection of human rights and the strengthening of democratic societies. Despite existing legal frameworks and institutional mechanisms, a large proportion of hate-motivated incidents never reach official channels, limiting both victim support and evidence-based policymaking. That is why this paper argues that sustained networking among key actors is essential to address this gap and presents the Zero Hate Network as a practical initiative for collaborative action against underreporting in hate crimes. The Zero Hate Network brings together actors from academia, civil society organizations, and public administrations, recognizing that underreporting is a multidimensional problem shaped by social mistrust, lack of awareness, institutional barriers, and insufficient data coordination. By fostering dialogue and cooperation across sectors, the network aims to improve detection and reporting pathways. The paper outlines several core initiatives developed within the network: the dissemination of hate crime resources through a dedicated website; awareness-raising campaigns targeting both professionals and the general public; the development of a Good Practices Manual on hate crime prevention and response; and the creation of spaces for exchange through a thematic forum and the network's annual meeting. Together, these initiatives strengthen knowledge transfer, institutional capacity, and trust between victims, communities, and authorities.

By showcasing the Zero Hate Network's experience, this contribution highlights the relevance of multi-actor networking as a strategic tool to counter hate crime underreporting and reinforces its role in safeguarding human rights and democratic values.



Speaker biography:

Researcher and social educator at Columbares, NGO in Spain, specialized in research and awareness-raising on discrimination and hate crimes. Coordinator of the Spanish Network against Hate Crimes and Underreporting and the Zero Hate Network.



Session 2, Panel 4: Preventing hate (2)

Performative Diversity or Genuine Inclusion? Rethinking Equity in Canadian Higher Education

Dr Wendy Fletcher

RUC, University Of Waterloo, Waterloo, Canada

Universities sit as a pivotal cornerstone in the edifice of Western society. Both as agents of innovation and hegemony, their role in framing the discourse which shapes the world as we know it is unparalleled. In the wake of an American push to strip universities of Equity language and work, the undertaking of Canadian universities to embrace diversity with an Equity and Inclusion lens has been brought into sharp relief. A commitment to re-make our universities through transformational equity work remains high on stated priority lists. However, a long history of largely unacknowledged racism, classism, and sexism (systemic, legalized, personal, and embedded) continues to work against the embrace of any inclusivity which is more than performative. This paper addresses the limitations of Canada's vision of itself as a genuinely inclusive and multicultural society, as sufficient to support the reformulation of our universities in a genuinely equitable mode of being. Gender based glass ceilings, racializing perspectives, class assumptions, and polarizing ideological commitments on both the left and right, have kept us from authentic and sustainable renovation. Following from that awareness, this paper proposes a model for reformulation which looks beyond the largely empty rhetoric embodied in metrics, towards meaningful and long lasting systemic and personal change. Addressing power and its uses, the role of trust, and our understandings of the human being, this paper proposes concrete actions intended to optimize the possibility of creating communities of belonging which are authentic and deeply rooted- the winds of political caprice notwithstanding. Serving as a ground from which our universities may rise to the challenge of leading and supporting societal discourse toward genuinely open and inclusive societies, this model challenges us to see ourselves as we are, as a necessary pathway to becoming something better.



Speaker biography:

Wendy Fletcher is Professor of Religious Studies and History, Director for the Centre of Interreligious Spirituality and Wisdom Practices at Renison University College, University of Waterloo. Wendy has served in higher education for over 35 years both as Professor and in senior administrative roles in three of Canada's top tier universities (Western; UBC; UW). She is widely published in the areas of religion and culture, including the role of religion in public policy and practice in relation to gender and race, as well as in the history of racism in Canada and the implications of racializing discourse for Canadian society.



Session 2, Panel 5: Addressing Hate Online

Democratising Online Hate Speech Governance: A Proposal for Independent Public Authorities and Civil Society Observatories

Prof Federico Oliveri

Università Di Camerino, Pisa,

Employing digital democratic constitutionalism as a theoretical frame, this paper analyses criticalities within the Council of Europe's 2022 and 2024 Recommendations on hate speech and hate crime. It interrogates the co-regulatory model for internet intermediaries (§§ 30-37), arguing it problematically delegates democratic powers and thereby undermines the Recommendations' effectiveness.

The analysis diagnoses three fundamental tensions. First, a democratic legitimacy deficit arises as private actors enact policies impacting constitutional rights (§§ 31, 32). Second, an illusion of accountability emerges from calls for transparency and independent audits (§§ 31, 37), which are inherently undermined by the algorithmic opacity of platforms and content moderation tools. Third, the imperative for impartial, human rights-trained moderators (§ 34) is unsustainable due to commercial pressures and the absence of public benchmarks for interpreting complex legal standards, such as hate speech severity (§ 32).

To resolve these tensions, this paper proposes a dual governance infrastructure grounded in public law. First, independent National and European Authorities with: 1) binding regulatory power over platform terms of service and calibration guidelines (§ 32); 2) algorithmic audit and inspection powers (§§ 36, 37); 3) corrective and sanctioning powers to address systemically harmful design (§ 36); 4) a public guarantor role, including certified moderator training (§§ 34, 35); and 5) a jurisdictional power to review platform moderation decisions in hard cases. Second, accredited Civil Society Observatories, to operationalise sustained civic oversight by users themselves. These bodies would serve as a structured channel for cooperation (§ 35), supplying empirical data and contextual expertise to the Authority, while acting as a permanent watchdog on platform compliance with human rights and the relevant ECHR case law.



This institutional framework aims to democratise digital power by pairing expert public regulation with institutionalised civic participation, ensuring governance of online hate speech is human rights-oriented, transparent, accountable, and effective.

Speaker biography:

Federico Oliveri is a Tenure Track Researcher in Legal Theory and Legal Informatics at the University of Camerino (Italy), Senior Fellow to the Sciences for Peace Interdisciplinary Centre at the University of Pisa, and member of the IT Workshop on Law, Ethics and Technology at the Research Centre on Discrimination and Vulnerability at the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia. He is also Managing Editor of the online journal "Jura Gentium. Journal of Philosophy of International Law and Global Politics", and Chief Editor of the online "Scienza & Pace Magazine". His research areas encompass theories of citizenship and digital rights, the regulation of digital platforms and artificial intelligence systems (for both civilian and military applications), digital forms of violence, and legal and political theories concerning peace, war, and fundamental rights. In addition to numerous articles and book chapters, he is the author of two key monographs: *Conflitti di cittadinanza. Jürgen Habermas e il problema del "soggetto rivoluzionario"* (2020) and *Machina mundi. Per una regolazione democratica dei poteri digitali* (2025).



Session 2, Panel 5: Addressing Hate Online

Leveraging the Digital Services Act - Introduction to Appeals Centre Europe

Leo Twigg: Anna McCarthy Adams, Sophie-Charlotte Walter

Appeals Centre Europe , Dublin,

Appeals Centre Europe is an out-of-court dispute settlement body certified by Coimisiún na Meán under the EU's Digital Services Act, established in Dublin. Individuals and organisations can turn to the Appeals Centre to challenge decisions by social media platforms – whether that's to restore a post that was wrongfully removed, or cases where the platform has failed to remove a hateful comment, for example. These cases will then be independently assessed by a team of experts. As such, the Appeals Centre is a practical tool in tackling online hate and should be able to add great value to participants of the conference, in particular for civil society, but also for academics and regulators.

By May 2026, we would be able to present the findings of our 2nd Transparency Report (e.g. trends in case submissions by civil society vs. private persons; trends in hateful conduct policy violations; in which geographies and content policy areas we find platforms make the most mistakes; which platforms are engaging in this process and where there's room for improvement) and the learnings since we started accepting cases in late 2024.

In sum, we are convinced we could provide an engaging, data-based and solution-oriented contribution to the event. We are hereby submitting our report as a "Paper" for the conference, but we would equally be happy to host a roundtable.

Speaker biographies:

Anna McCarthy Adams works as Senior Case Review Director at Appeals Centre Europe. In her role, Anna oversees the independent decision-making by the Appeals Centre and is in charge of relations with platforms. Anna has previously worked in Trust and Safety and has a legal background.



Sophie-Charlotte Walter leads European public affairs and communications for Appeals Centre Europe.

Leo Twiggs is the Public Policy Lead for the Appeals Centre Europe (ACE). Leo has been working to ensure respect for human rights for over two decades, now focusing on promoting and protecting human rights online. A human rights lawyer by training, Leo has previously worked for UNDP, in Trust & Safety at Twitter, as an advisor to the Director General of the Law Society of Ireland, and now leads public policy at ACE.



Session 2, Panel 5: Addressing Hate Online

Media and Online Hate: Implementing the Council of Europe Recommendations

Lavinia Pedol

University Of Milan, Milan, Italy

Hate speech and hate crime pose increasingly serious challenges to the protection of human rights, social cohesion, and the effective functioning of democratic governance, both in Europe and beyond. Their growing normalisation within political discourse, media ecosystems, and digital environments undermines the principles of equality, human dignity, and democratic participation enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights, thereby exacerbating social divisions and eroding public trust in democratic institutions.

Within this context, the adoption by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe of the Recommendations on combating hate speech (CM/Rec(2022)16) and combating hate crime (CM/Rec(2024)4) has established a coherent and comprehensive human rights-based framework for addressing hate in its diverse forms and manifestations.

Digital environments and contemporary media play a central role in the dissemination, normalisation, and amplification of hate speech, with far-reaching implications for the exercise of fundamental rights and the quality of democratic life. The Council of Europe Recommendations therefore provide an essential normative and value-based framework for addressing these challenges in the online sphere, while simultaneously raising critical questions regarding their effective and consistent implementation in digital contexts.

This thematic strand invites scholarly and practice-oriented contributions that examine the application of the Recommendations within online environments – including social media platforms, content-sharing services, and messaging applications – as well as the roles and responsibilities of digital platforms and traditional media in preventing and



countering hate. Particular attention is devoted to the impact of algorithmic systems, engagement-driven business models, and content moderation practices on the proliferation of hate speech, the polarisation of public discourse, and the circulation of disinformation.

Speaker biography:

Lavinia Pedol is a doctoral candidate in Criminal Law at the University of Milan, where she also earned her law degree. Her current research focuses on hate crimes and discrimination, with particular attention to the intersection between penal repression and anti-discrimination norms in both domestic and international legal frameworks. Her doctoral project explores how criminal law addresses identity-based violence, with an emphasis on online hate speech and systemic bias.

Alongside her academic work, Lavinia is completing her legal traineeship at a criminal law firm, where she frequently engages with cases involving hate-based offences, marginalised groups, and freedom of expression. She has previously interned at the Milan Court, gaining valuable insight into the practical dimensions of criminal justice. She is actively involved in research initiatives at the University of Milan and remains committed to advancing legal approaches to combating discrimination, fostering social inclusion, and defending human dignity through the rule of law.



Session 2, Panel 5: Addressing Hate Online

Algorithmic Political Hate Speech: A Conceptual Framework

Dr Gizem Yardimci

University of Limerick, Ireland

In 2024, elections had taken place in over 70 countries, meaning that more than half of the world's population had participated in democratic processes. Recent research claims that individuals were directed or manipulated by generative AI-driven political bots during the 2024 elections. Political bots play a key role in computational propaganda. They are equipped with features to generate automated interactions with other users about politics. They were employed for manipulative purposes during electoral processes, such as the BREXIT referendum, the 2016 US presidential election, or the Catalan independence referendum, often in conjunction with political propaganda. AI-driven political bots actively amplify opinions, existing societal prejudices, disseminate biased content, and target influential politicians with hate speech. Indeed, hate speech can evolve into algorithmic hate speech, produced and intensified through bots. This relatively new dimension of hate speech relies on a broader concept: "algorithmic speech", which can be described as speech generated by machines. The current legal framework in the EU does not cover expressions generated by AI systems rather than by human actors. This research investigates the legal framework from the freedom of expression and information perspective regarding the use of political bots during democratic processes in the EU. It explores how AI Act could prevent political bots from being used as a tool for algorithmic political hate speech. Also, it addresses this concept from the perspective of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

Speaker biography:

Gizem is a visiting academic at The European Centre for the Study of Hate at University of Limerick. She completed her PhD in Artificial Intelligence (AI) Law, specialising in AI governance, digital rights, and human rights-based approaches to emerging technologies. She completed her PhD at Maynooth University under the supervision of



Dr David Mangan. Her PhD thesis, titled “Regulating Manipulative Political Bots Around Political Elections: The Artificial Intelligence Act and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union,” was funded by Research Ireland. Gizem holds a Bachelor’s degree in Law from Marmara University and a Master’s degree in Human Rights from Ankara University. Her master’s thesis, titled “The Right to Free Elections in the Decisions of the European Court of Human Rights,” was completed as part of her master’s programme, from which she graduated with a GPA of 4.00/4.00.

In 2026, Gizem co-authored the book “Code and Freedoms: Conversations on the Political Economy of Artificial Intelligence” (in Turkish) with Altug Yalcintas. Her research interests focus on political bots, computational politics, electoral technologies, digital human rights, AI accountability, and responsible and trustworthy AI. Gizem’s future research agenda places particular emphasis on algorithmic political speech, particularly algorithmic political hate speech. Additionally, she has been a registered lawyer with the Ankara Bar Association since 2014.



Session 3, Panel 1

We own our own words: Tackling Hate Speech and Online Academic Incivility

Through Educative Approaches - Roundtable

Dr Wannette Van Eg Dom -Tuinstra, Mrs Bryony Gilbert

The Open University, UK/ROI,

The higher education sector grapples with inappropriate conduct by students as part of wider academic incivility, which increasingly focuses on student-to-student interaction online. For example, it is often lamented by tutors that module forums become extensions of the ‘twittersphere’ where a highly interconnected world is simultaneously divisive and polemical. Academic incivility can and does sometimes descend into issues of hate speech.

Addressing academic incivility is a particular imperative for legal education owing to the need to train students in legal argument, and the impact that a record of academic incivility can have on their professional aspirations. Law students value robust debate, but may hold polemical views, and forcefully express them, all of which can foster incivility in online exchanges. At worst this can spill over into allegations of bullying, hate speech, discrimination or harassment, necessitating disciplinary interventions. At the same time, universities have to balance these risks and duty of care with the necessity of ensuring free speech in an academic environment.

Traditional methods of dealing with academic incivility either ignore the problem or focus on disciplinary actions, however, investigating the root causes of student incivility suggests that in many cases the behaviour can be more effectively addressed by educative and restorative justice approaches.

In this roundtable discussion we share some of the pilot educative approaches to addressing academic incivility at the Open University, evaluating these for their capacity to transform incidences of academic incivility into opportunities to understand difference, address hate speech and actively empower learners with to create safe, inclusive online learning spaces. The roundtable provides the opportunity for participants to discuss competing visions of free speech and priorities in a learning environment.



Speaker biographies:

Dr Wannette Van Eg Dom – Tuinstra is the first Head of Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility for the Faculty of Business and Law at The Open University. A Senior Fellow of the HEA she is committed to widening and access and participation in higher education through her scholarship and pedagogical praxis. As a legal scholar, Wannette has researched and published on a range of European Human Rights and Alternative Dispute Resolution topics and is also an Employment Mediator.

Bryony Gilbert has been an Associate Lecturer at the Law School since 2006, becoming a Student Experience Manager in 2021. The focus of her scholarship is on supporting our Level 1 Law students. Bryony's particular motivation is to innovate practices that assist and support neuro-divergent students to be represented and included in the study of law, whilst helping staff to navigate the changing landscape of higher education.



Session 3, Panel 2

The Cure for Hate — Film Screening and Discussion Panel

Mr Peter Hutchison, Mr Tony McAleer

The Cure For Hate, Brooklyn, United States

At a moment of escalating polarization, rising antisemitism, Islamophobia, and politically motivated violence, effective interventions that address the roots of hate and radicalization—particularly among youth—are urgently needed. The Cure for Hate is a feature documentary and accompanying educational impact program that examines pathways into and out of violent extremist ideologies, while offering practical tools for prevention and resilience-building.

The film follows Tony McAleer, a former neo-Nazi leader and Holocaust denier turned anti-hate educator & activist, on a deeply personal journey of teshuvah (atonement & return), by bearing witness to the ravages of the Holocaust at Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Interweaving personal testimony with historical context, the film explores the social, psychological, and political conditions that allow extremist movements to flourish, drawing parallels between 1930s Europe and contemporary democratic erosion.

The conference session will include a screening of the film, followed by an overview of The Cure for Hate Educational Impact Program, a research-informed, modular curriculum designed in collaboration with educators and prevention specialists.

Funded initially by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Center for Prevention Programs & Partnerships, the program has engaged vulnerable youth and communities to strengthen resilience against radicalization across the United States. The curriculum combines storytelling, experiential learning, and digital literacy to help students recognize "othering," counter online recruitment tactics, and develop empathy-based responses to polarization, de-humanization and ideological extremism.

The presentation will also share emerging impact evidence from school-based and community implementations, highlighting shifts in student attitudes and enhanced capacity for dialogue across difference. The session will conclude with an open discussion on the role of narrative, education, and restorative approaches in countering hate and rebuilding social cohesion in an increasingly polarized world.



Speaker biographies:

Peter Hutchison is an award-winning filmmaker, author, educator & activist.

His work understanding the seeds of hate & violent extremism have resulted in the critically-acclaimed films "The Cure for Hate: Bearing Witness to Auschwitz" (PBS) and "Healing from Hate". His clinical background and experience with at-risk teens informed the creation of the adjacent educational campaign & curriculum – now in its 4th year, it has engaged with over 10,000 students.

His numerous films include "Requiem for the American Dream" (ft. Noam Chomsky), and "The Invisible Doctrine: The Secret History of Neoliberalism" (ft. George Monbiot), both of which have resulted in best-selling companion-piece books.

Tony McAleer is a Canadian author, activist, and former neo-Nazi leader who spent 15 years in the white supremacist movement. He rose to prominence as a recruiter for the White Aryan Resistance and co-founder of the Aryan Resistance Movement.

After leaving the movement, McAleer co-founded Life After Hate, a nonprofit dedicated to helping others disengage from extremist groups. He now collaborates globally with communities, law enforcement, and governments to counter extremism.

Through his book *The Cure for Hate* and international speaking, Tony challenges violent ideologies and demonstrates how accountability, empathy and compassion can disrupt cycles of hate.



Session 3, Panel 3: Hate crime in the criminal justice system (1)

Albanian practice of the use of CoE Recommendations on combating hate speech and hate crime

Dr Robert Gajda¹, Magistrate Gëzim Spahiu²

¹Commissioner For Protection From Discrimination, Elbasan, Albania, ²Prosecution Office, Shkodër, Albania

The need to combat hate speech and hate crimes is increasingly presented as a necessity for everyone engaged in the protection of human rights. Equality bodies (EB) and the judiciary have recently taken an essential and expanding role in addressing hate speech and hate crimes.

Given that classifying certain speeches as hate speech inevitably involves restricting freedom of expression, it is crucial that the decision-making of EB to be exhaustive in both reasoning and argumentation. The rich jurisprudence of the ECtHR supports this process by providing indicators for assessing proportionality, balance, and severity factors necessary to determine whether freedom of expression has exceeded its legitimate limits by disturbing others. At the same time, identifying the hate motive in criminal investigations is a key element in forming a complete picture of a case adjudicated as a hate crime.

Furthermore, the acts of the Council of Europe, particularly those of ECRI and the Committee of Minister, contribute to a deeper understanding among states and foster stronger commitments to meeting standards in the fight against hate speech and hate crimes. In this regard, the Recommendations on the Fight against Hate Speech and Hate Crimes serve as instruments that guide states on relevant regulations, principles, and subjects that should be considered.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the experience of EB and the judiciary, as well as their use of these Recommendations as argumentative tools in decision-making and as guidance for necessary legal reforms. More specifically, the paper focuses on the



experience of the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination in Albania, as well as the practices of judicial and investigative bodies. In addition, the paper will analyze the newly reformed criminal-legal framework currently under revision in Albania and will provide possible suggestions for its improvement and alignment with Council of Europe recommendations.

Speaker biographies:

Robert Gajda, PhD Is currently Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination in Albania. Previously, He was a lecturer of Constitutional Law and Administrative Law at the University of Elbasan and has received his PhD for Constitutional Justice and Fundamental Rights at the University of Pisa, Italy, in 2015. He has a conspicuous academic activity in writing articles in law reviews and conferences proceedings, in organizing scientific conferences and in 2017 He has published a monograph titled “Individual constitutional complaints in the Albanian legal order. Comparative aspects”, Bonomo Editore, Bologna. He has collaborated with various civil society organizations, especially in relation to the recognition and promotion of human rights as a lecturer, trainer, organizer of legal clinics and collaborator in concrete studies. He has been engaged as an activist together with intellectuals, students, citizens, NGOs in support of civic initiatives but also as project winners. Areas of interest are constitutional aspects, human rights, effective implementation of the law, local government, administrative law, legal advice etc.

Magistrate Gëzim Spahiu. Currently serving as a Magistrate-Prosecutor. Graduated from the Albanian School of Magistrates. Graduated cum laude with a Bachelor Degree in Law and with a Master of Science focused in Civil Law from the University of Tirana, Faculty of Law.



Session 3, Panel 3: Hate crime in the criminal justice system (1)

Bridging the Divide: Survivor, Police, and Community Perspectives on Collaborative Hate Crime Response in Canada

Kassandra Roul, Dr Michael Woodworth

The University of British Columbia, Kelowna, Canada

Hate-motivated incidents and crimes produce profound psychological harm, yet institutional responses remain fragmented across justice and community systems. This multi-phase, qualitative study examines how victims/survivors, police, and community-based professionals conceptualize hate crime response and interagency collaboration in Canada. Grounded in a community-based participatory research approach, the study seeks to identify systemic barriers and facilitators to coordinated, survivor-centered responses. By examining stakeholder perspectives, the project aims to identify points of convergence and tension shaping victim/survivor support.

Semi-structured interviews are currently being conducted with 10–12 adult victims/survivors in British Columbia who have experienced a hate-motivated incident/crime. Participants are recruited through community organizations and advocacy networks, with interviews held via secure videoconferencing. Questions explore institutional responsiveness, emotional safety, access to support, and recommendations for systemic improvement. An advisory group composed of community professionals and individuals with lived experience provides ongoing guidance to ensure findings reflect lived realities. Subsequently, focus groups with community-based professionals and police will examine interagency practices, role clarity, and coordination challenges, with guides informed by themes emerging from victim/survivor interviews. Data will be analyzed using framework analysis guided by the Collaborative Governance Regime (CGR) framework and Trauma- and Violence-Informed Care (TVIC) principles, enabling systematic cross-group comparison while preserving survivor-centered priorities.

Preliminary and anticipated findings suggest survivors describe both validating encounters and secondary harm linked to inconsistent recognition of hate impacts,



limited follow-up, and fragmented referral pathways. Professionals may identify structural constraints and role ambiguity as barriers to coordination. Across groups, transparent communication, survivor choice, and clearly defined collaborative processes are expected to emerge as central to effective support.

Findings aim to inform integrated, trauma-informed response models that strengthen collaboration between justice and community sectors while centering survivor-defined priorities within institutional reform efforts. Ultimately, this research seeks to advance collaborative approaches that embed trauma-informed principles within cross-sector policy and practice.

Speaker biographies:

Kassandra Roul is a Master's student in Clinical Psychology at the University of British Columbia Okanagan, supervised by Dr Michael Woodworth. Her research focuses on institutional responses to hate-motivated incidents and crimes, integrating collaborative governance and trauma- and violence-informed care frameworks within justice and community systems. She has practical experience working with victim services, policing, and community agencies, grounding her research in applied justice contexts. Her broader research examines pathways to violence and victimization across the lifespan, including adverse childhood experiences, online hostility, and family-system dynamics. Her work emphasizes strengthening coordinated, survivor-centered responses to complex forms of interpersonal harm.

Dr Michael Woodworth is a Professor of Clinical Psychology at the University of British Columbia Okanagan and a Registered Psychologist in the province of British Columbia. His research focuses on violence risk assessment, psychopathy, criminal behavior, and computer-facilitated communication, particularly within forensic and investigative contexts. He has published extensively in forensic and clinical psychology and regularly collaborates with justice-sector agencies on research initiatives. Dr Woodworth's work emphasizes integrating empirical psychological science with applied legal and investigative practice to inform assessment, investigation, and policy development within criminal justice systems, including both in-person and online offending contexts.



Session 3, Panel 3: Hate crime in the criminal justice system (1)

Understanding and Responding to the Impact of Hate Crime on Trust

Dr Anne-Mai Flyvholm, Rasmus Mortensen

¹Copenhagen Police, Copenhagen N, Denmark

Research on the impacts of hate crime shows that ‘hate crimes hurt more,’ with recent studies indicating that trust is particularly affected. Moreover, these trust impacts can be further exacerbated by the interactions that unfold in the aftermath of a hate crime. This raises the question of how trust can be repaired following such experiences. In this presentation, we examine such impacts of hate incidents and crimes on trust in Denmark. We then present practical steps that we aim to implement in the police to rebuild trust in the aftermath of hate crimes. Thereby, we discuss ways in which research insights can inform police practices regarding hate crime.

The theoretical part of the presentation draws on a qualitative study by Anne-Mai Flyvholm (2025) at the University of Copenhagen. Based on interviews with Muslims and Jews in the Greater Copenhagen Area, the research examines how the consequences of hate incidents and crimes extend beyond direct victims, impacting their trust in public institutions and fellow citizens. We emphasize how interactions following hate crimes and incidents—where victims’ experiences are dismissed, neglected, or trivialized—can erode trust. This research demonstrates how hate incidents and crimes affect interpersonal trust, as well as trust in public institutions, including law enforcement, and even self-trust.

In the second part of the presentation, we reflect on how the insights from this and other relevant research are being gradually implemented through a series of initiatives in our work at the Copenhagen Police. These initiatives include outreach for victims, witnesses, and those who report hate crimes; the development of tailored training for officers across divisions, focusing on both legal protocols, investigation and victim support; and monitoring crime reports for potential hate crimes to ensure proper



registration and categorization. Finally, we are working to foster stronger collaborations with civil society organizations.

Speaker biographies:

Anne-Mai Flyvholm holds a PhD from University of Copenhagen's Department of Cross-Cultural and Regional Studies where she has conducted research on the community impact of hate crime among Muslims and Jews in the Greater Copenhagen Area. Anne-Mai Flyvholm is currently working as a Senior Advisor for Copenhagen Police's Department of Crime Prevention where she works to qualify the Copenhagen Police's response to hate crimes with a particular focus on how to foster trust and sense of safety among victims of hate crime.

Rasmus Mortensen is a Police Sergeant with Copenhagen Police, where he works as one of the two hate crime coordinators in the Department of Crime Prevention. He started his police career as an operative street officer and subsequently moved into special investigation where he worked in the serious financial crime unit. Rasmus has also been a part of Copenhagen Police Departments diversity and equity unit, which serves as a knowledge hub where a broad segment of the Copenhagen police force come together to ensure a safe and inclusive work environment for all.



Session 3, Panel 3: Hate crime in the criminal justice system (1)

Psychological Profiles of Perpetrators in the Context of Hate Crime

Selen Soysal-Kazanç

Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin, Germany

Hate crimes are increasingly recognized as a distinct form of violence shaped by psychological, developmental, and ideological mechanisms. This review synthesizes empirical research comparing offenders who commit bias-motivated crimes with those who engage in non-bias violent offending. Across quantitative and qualitative studies, hate-crime offenders show elevated levels of hostility, anger dysregulation, empathy deficits, low self-control, and hostile attribution bias—patterns often linked to early adversity or chronic strain. These factors, however, predict hate-motivated aggression primarily when combined with hierarchical ideological dispositions, particularly high Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA) and Social Dominance Orientation (SDO). Such dispositions amplify perceived threat from out-groups and morally justify aggression. Although pathways into hate crime vary, consistent psychological patterns distinguish hate-crime offenders from general violent offenders. This review integrates these findings into an empirically grounded framework outlining the cognitive, emotional, and ideological processes that contribute to bias-motivated aggression and identifies key directions for future research and risk assessment.

Speaker biography:

Selen Soysal is a doctoral researcher in a cooperative PhD program between the Free University of Berlin and the Berlin School of Economics and Law (HWR Berlin). Her dissertation examines psychological profiles and motivational structures of offenders in the context of ideologically motivated hate crime, with a particular focus on offender typologies. She holds an M.Sc. in Psychology with a specialization in Legal Psychology from Medical School Berlin and a B.A. in Applied Psychology. Her previous research at the Forensic-Therapeutic Outpatient Clinic of Charité Berlin examined cognitive distortions in the consumption of child abuse imagery.



Session 3, Panel 4: Gendered experiences of hate (2)

‘It’s the Women’: Antifeminist Hate and Digital Violence as Democratic Threats

Grit Marti Lange

Humboldt University Of Berlin, Berlin, Germany

This contribution examines contemporary antifeminism as a central ideological component of anti-democratic and antiliberal dynamics, focusing on its manifestation as online hate and digital violence. Antifeminism functions as a core element of right-wing politics targeting gender equality, feminism, and queer lives, and increasingly materialises through harassment, intimidation, and hostility in digital public spaces (Hate Aid, 2025; Regehr et al., 2024).

Current forms of antifeminism are characterised by an explicit politics of hate in which structural problems associated with neoliberal transformation, such as social insecurity, precarisation, and crises of care, are reframed as identity-based conflicts. In these narratives, feminist actors and movements are constructed as responsible for perceived social decline, displacing attention away from structural inequalities toward personalised blame (Henninger, 2021).

Research demonstrates that antifeminist online hate is deeply gendered and has tangible democratic consequences (Hate Aid, 2025). Those affected by digital violence, particularly women, feminists, LGBTQIA+ persons, and politically visible actors, frequently experience silencing effects, including self-censorship, withdrawal from public debate, and reduced political participation. Antifeminist hate thus operates as a mechanism of democratic exclusion, shaping who can safely speak, participate, and remain visible in digital public spheres.

Digital platforms play a key role in enabling and intensifying these dynamics. Attention-driven infrastructures amplify hostile and polarising content, embedding antifeminist narratives into everyday online environments (Matlach et al., 2025). While regulatory frameworks such as the EU Digital Services Act (DSA) acknowledge systemic risks



posed by online harms, antifeminist hate and gender-based digital violence remain insufficiently addressed in practice, allowing their democratic consequences to persist (Griffin, 2025).

By situating antifeminism within a broader continuum of right-wing hate and violence, this contribution highlights its significance as a structural threat to democratic participation, pluralism, and public safety.

Speaker biography:

Grit Marti Lange is a Master's student focusing on digital violence, platform governance, and feminist technology critique at the intersection of democracy, human rights, and security studies. Her work examines how online hate, particularly antifeminist hostility, undermines democratic participation and reshapes digital public spheres. Alongside her academic research, she is actively engaged in policy and civil society work. As a board member of Netzforma*, she works on platform regulation and access to justice for those affected by digital violence and is also active within the Youth IGF-D, contributing to youth perspectives on digital policy and governance.



Session 3, Panel 4: Gendered experiences of hate (2)

Necropolitical Relationality and Material Transition: A Case for Monstrosity

Dr Yianna Liatsos

University of Limerick

I want to lay claim to the dark power of my monstrous identity without using it as a weapon against others or being wounded by it myself.

Susan Stryker

The paper I propose to present will map a constellation of solidarity across three discourses of transition—those of transgender studies; women’s studies; and refugee studies. The task is connected to Susan Stryker’s epigraph, which aspires toward a strategic deployment of the monstrosity projected onto her as a transgendered subject. With Stryker’s appeal in mind, my paper aims to generate a multidimensional understanding of the affective, infrastructural and social charges that transition entails in each of the above-mentioned states of lived experience, for the purpose of composing a more capacious narrative of how the fluidity of boundary-crossing identities mediates the anxieties and necropolitics of corporeal precarity.

The paper begins with a discussion of the paradoxical grounding and precarity of corporeality, and considers the gamut of storylines that address embodied vulnerability—both the prescriptive prose that aspires toward stasis/maintenance and is captured in narratives of overcoming, and the explorative prose that aspires toward zones of safe passaging and passing. The paper then proceeds to build its argument through closely reading the experience of transition in two recent films on the experience of gender and female aging transition (Josh Greenbaum’s 2024 *Will & Harper* and Coralie Fargeat’s 2024 *The Substance*, respectively), and through an epistolary autobiography written by a second generation queer Vietnamese refugee to his illiterate mother (Ocean Vuong’s 2019 *On Earth We’re Briefly Gorgeous*). While identifying the necropolitical spectre haunting each narrative, I trace the distinct relational dynamics and strategies of transition that emerge in each of these three texts, in order to generate a constellation of a monstrous collective sensorium and reflect on its responses to the necropolitics of our times.



Speaker biography:

Yianna Liatsos is an Associate Professor of English at the University of Limerick, Ireland. She teaches African and Postcolonial Literatures with an emphasis on Indigenous and Refugee writing. Her current research explores narratives of temporal dissonance in medical and environmental humanities, and more specifically, the relational dynamics and social orientation of texts associated with terminality.



Session 3, Panel 4: Gendered experiences of hate (2)

Transphobia and the Production of Fatal Violence: A Cross-continental Analysis of Anti-Trans Homicide in the US and Europe

Prof Mark Walters

European Centre for The Study of Hate, University Of Limerick, Brighton, United Kingdom

Despite a growing body of scholarship on transphobic hate crime, the most extreme manifestation of such violence – homicide – remains underexamined, particularly outside the United States. This paper presents findings from an original mixed-methods study documenting and analysing anti-trans homicides across the 57 participating States of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) between 2014 and 2024. Drawing on quantitative and qualitative analysis of the OSCE’s hate crime database, combined with a qualitative thematic examination of 50 media reports, the study provides the most comprehensive cross-national account of lethal anti-trans violence to date.

The analysis reveals that transgender people, especially trans women, constitute a disproportionate majority of victims, with killings shaped by intersecting factors including race, migration status, sex-work involvement, intimate interpersonal relationships, and spatial context. Distinct patterns emerge across jurisdictions in methods of killing, victim–offender relationships, and situational settings, reflecting the influence of local legal frameworks, political climates, and access to lethal weapons. The findings demonstrate that anti-trans homicides are not isolated acts, but structurally patterned forms of violence embedded within broader regimes of cultural imperialism, political targeting, and socially sanctioned hostility toward transgender and gender-diverse identities.

The paper concludes by identifying critical gaps in hate crime recording practices and ongoing institutional resistance evident in prosecution and sentencing outcomes,



before outlining implications for policy development and international human rights responses.

Speaker biography:

Mark Walters is Adjunct Professor of Criminal Law and Hate Studies, University of Limerick and Honorary Professor of Law, University of Sussex. His research interests are focused primarily on hate crime studies, as well as criminal law and criminal justice reform with a special emphasis on restorative justice practice and theory. Mark's research has a particular focus on anti-LGBTQ+ hate and LGBTQ+ rights more broadly.



Session 3, Panel 4: Gendered experiences of hate (2)

Computational Analysis of Immigration Narratives: Studying Gendered Experiences of Immigration and Integration in Ireland

Deepak John Reji

Department of Sociology, University of Limerick, Castletroy, Ireland

As Goffman (1974) argued, everyday public attitudes are not static reflections of individual beliefs but are constructed through patterned social interactions. Yet immigration attitudes are still often treated as fixed, demographically predictable, or primarily shaped by policy frameworks. This project challenges that view by investigating how public perceptions of male and female immigrants in Ireland shift over time in response to critical events, media narratives, and hybrid communication systems that include both human and automated (bot) actors.

This study uses a dynamic attitude network framework grounded in identity theory, computational sociology and AI, specifically Natural Language Processing, to explore how symbolic links between attitude expressions become 'locked in' to collective identities over time, especially under social stressors like policy change or publicized crises. It draws on multiple data sources, including news media corpora and the reactions to critical events affecting immigrants in Ireland. These data will be transformed into network models to capture how societal attitudes are reinforced, disrupted, or realigned.

Preliminary hypotheses for this study are centred around my previous research on societal attitudes. First, societal attitudes toward immigration, as mediated through public discourse, do not evolve continuously or cumulatively. Instead, it is reactionary and often triggered by critical events, rather than reflecting a sustained or temporally linear discourse. This absence of a linear progression was confirmed through statistical analysis, which found no significant time-based effect.



This challenges structuralist frameworks such as Inglehart and Welzel's (2005) modernization theory, which assumes public attitudes evolve gradually in tandem with economic and institutional development. Second, there is evidence of topic distraction in media, where emotionally charged narratives about immigration gain visibility while structured debates around policy and integration are sidelined. This thematic disconnection actively distorts the progression of public perception, yielding to polarization of identity-aligned attitudes during periods of heightened social sensitivity.

Speaker biography:

Deepak John Reji is currently a PhD researcher in the Department of Sociology at the University of Limerick, specialising in Computational Social Science. His PhD research focuses on Immigration and Societal Attitudes in Ireland, with two main fronts, simulations using Agents and Emotions and Critical events. Deepak is an experienced Data Scientist with over 9 years' industry experience, passionate about integrating his AI modelling skills into social science and ethical AI development workstreams. Deepak strongly believes in the power of open source and the democratization of AI. He also partners with Xtreme Reality Lab, working on interactive experience projects.



Session 3, Panel 5: Communicating Hate

The Politics of Hate: IDF Soldiers' Videos and the Linguistic Making of Genocidal Violence

Dr Siti Nurnadilla Mohamad Jamil

Lancaster University & International Islamic University Malaysia, Lancaster/Gombak,
United Kingdom/Malaysia

Since October 2023, soldiers of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) have circulated large volumes of video content from Gaza across major social media platforms, often using identifiable accounts and narrating their actions in real time. This paper analyses these recordings as a corpus of perpetrator-produced discourse and examines how hate is linguistically mobilised in ways that enable genocidal violence. Situated within Critical Discourse Studies and informed by Sara Ahmed's (2004) account of how emotions circulate and acquire "stickiness", the paper conceptualises hate as an affective-discursive practice whose force lies in its organisation and repetition rather than in individual intention. The dataset consists of a systematically curated archive of publicly available videos produced by IDF soldiers over a six-month period, from 7 October 2023 to 7 April 2024. The analysis identifies recurring linguistic and visual configurations through which hate is enacted, including dehumanising nomination practices, racialised and gendered predication, evaluative mockery, celebratory narration of destruction, and explicit or implicit exterminatory formulations. The paper shows how these discursive patterns stabilise antagonistic distinctions between "us" and "them", authorise entitlement to violence, and render Palestinian bodies and spaces legitimate targets. The first-person, handheld format of the videos intensifies this process by positioning viewers within the soldier's perceptual field, thereby normalising extreme violence as justified or necessary. The paper does not seek to establish individual criminal responsibility or legal determinations of genocide. Instead, it examines how genocidal violence is linguistically enabled through hate as discourse. These findings are situated within the human-rights framework of the Council of Europe, with reference to CM/Rec(2022)16 on combating hate speech, and highlight the challenges such perpetrator-produced discourse poses for democratic safeguards.



Speaker biography:

Siti Nurnadilla Mohamad Jamil is an assistant professor of Linguistics at the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) and a visiting researcher at Lancaster University, United Kingdom. Her work in Critical Discourse Studies explores how language constructs and contests power, with a focus on campaign rhetoric, race, and marginalisation. Her current project investigates the language of violence during the genocide against Palestinians following 7 October 2023. “Siti Nurnadilla Mohamad Jamil” is a Malay patronymic name, “Mohamad Jamil” is her father’s name, and she has no family surname.



Session 3, Panel 5: Communicating Hate

Online Hate Speech as a threat to freedom of expression. The case of public space in Poland.

Dr Anna Leszczuk - Fiedziukiewicz

University of Białystok, BIAŁYSTOK, Poland

The internet was supposed to be a medium providing access to information and freedom of expression. It has become a place perceived as dangerous to business, politics and everyday communication. In addition to the diagnosed polarisation (a consequence of algorithmisation), there are predictions that uncontrolled aggression on the internet may contribute to an increase in violence in society.

The aim of the presentation is to examine media discourse centred on statements made by well-known individuals who are active on the internet (own website, YouTube channel, social media). These individuals come from various areas of social life (science, business, show business, the NGO sector). They inform the public about negative, toxic content in comments published online (hate) which goes beyond mere insults. This content includes threats, blackmail, and provocation that causes fear for their own lives and those of their loved ones (family, children).

As a result of exposure to this content, public figures (actors, science popularisers, celebrities) report deteriorating well-being and mental health. They also try individual solutions such as ridiculing the hater by publishing print screens of their content and revealing their name or pseudonym.

The context will be the demand to respond to online hate speech. Polish society is increasingly and vocally demanding that administrators and moderators of websites and web portals take responsibility for toxic, negative and harmful content published online. Politicians are drafting bills to punish hate speech, but these are not gaining support from part of society.



The emerging social campaigns on hate speech and cyberbullying confirm the hypothesis that this phenomenon has become a social pathology and requires cooperation among various partners (the IT industry, politicians, citizens). The presentation will attempt to diagnose this critical situation.

Speaker biography:

Anna Leszczuk-Fiedziukiewicz is a Doctor of Sociology working at the Faculty of Sociology in the Department of Sociology of Organisation. She teaches sociology, criminology and management courses in the following subjects: Information Management, Sociology of Social Change, Sociology in Management, Psychopathology, Media Theories. For several years, she has been teaching foreign language students as part of the Erasmus programme (Introduction to Hate Studies, Sociology of Crime and Social Pathologies). Her research focuses on online hate speech, and she has published seven articles on this topic (campaigns against cyberbullying, civic initiatives combating hate speech, moderating hate speech using AI).



Session 3, Panel 5: Communicating Hate

Artificial Intelligence Equity, Equal Protection and Ethics

Marc Brenman

Idare Llc, Kensington, United States

Artificial intelligence has become pervasive in contemporary society, and all signs indicate that it will expand in use and influence. It tends to repeat the prejudices and stereotypes found in society, in part because it is trained on large language models, extremely large databases of human utterances. It is also used to create misinformation, disinformation, and deepfakes which inflame hate. There is no accountability, and AI programs sometimes “hallucinate,” or make things up. This machine irrationality is analogous to irrational prejudice and discrimination carried out by human beings and some of our institutions, in forms such as institutional racism. While some attempts are being made to cure these problems, even experts don’t know what goes on inside the Black Box of AI programs. There are many questions about use of AI programs, including who has access to them, problems with data-derived decisions on access to benefits and services such as mortgages and credit that create less opportunity, lack of transparency, lack of knowledge, and lack of consultation with communities subject to AI use. Privacy issues include that fact that the queries we make and the responses received are being recorded, that we have near-universal surveillance and the panopticon, lack of informed consent, if one does not consent lack of access to vital services, and even scrutiny of trash collection, like discarded pregnancy tests. These factors can play into dangerous ideology, like the War on Women. There are mistakes in facial recognition, predictive policing, and predictive recidivism. There is the issue of seizure of large data bases, which can be used for nefarious purposes. Some studies show that AI programs are more likely to take risks than human actors. It is already true that some programs cannot be turned off, or resist being turned off, including sometimes turning against their operators.



Speaker biography:

Marc Brenman, Former Exec Dir, Wash St Human Rights Commission; Senior Civil Rights Policy Advisor, US Transportation Dept; Executive, Office for Civil Rights, US Education Dept. Books: *The Right to Transportation*; *Planning as if People Matter: Governing for Social Equity*; *When Hate Groups March Down Main Street: Community Response to Neo-Nazi and Rightwing Groups*. Ed., *Religious Diversity in the Workplace*. Papers: *Social Equity Impact Assessment*; *Environmental Justice in Indian Country*; *Reducing Minority Health Disparities*; *Reducing Police Violence*; *Model Public School Hate Response Plan*. Diversity Stds Task Force. Young African Leaders Initiative. Equity and Native American Committees, Transportation Research Bd.



Session 3, Panel 5: Communicating Hate

Crafting the Undeserving Victim: Hate Speech and Narrative Warfare in State Repression

Dr Fikret Demirçivi

Solidarity With Others, Brussels, Belgium

Authoritarian regimes build their survival on the manipulation of public perception. These governments construct a machinery of repression where narrative warfare systematically dehumanizes targets. This presentation investigates how hate speech, proliferating across physical spaces and digital platforms, operates as a deliberate form of victim blaming. Drawing on qualitative interviews with survivors of state repression in Türkiye and social network analysis, the research reveals how authorities and their supporters label ordinary citizens as terrorists and criminals. Such persistent labeling alters the societal reception of the targeted individuals. Can a persecuted citizen retain the status of an ideal victim when state-sponsored hate speech labels them a fundamental security threat?

Hate speech strips targets of their victimhood by framing them as guilty and undeserving. This manufactured perception of guilt accomplishes two critical objectives. It justifies the lawfare, transforming courts into instruments of persecution. It also makes systemic oppression palatable for perpetrators and the general public. State actors find moral justification for their brutality, while citizens withdraw their empathy, abandoning the targeted groups to social death. Victims, however, utilize social media and human rights platforms to foster solidarity, support victims, and resist. They form human rights organizations, online networks, and hashtag campaigns to contest official narratives, challenge their criminalization, and demand accountability.

State-sponsored hate speech engineers moral disengagement among the general populace. Citizens observe the brutalization of their neighbors and, to insulate themselves from the terror of arbitrary violence, adopt the state's narrative. They



embrace the just world fallacy, convincing themselves the victims invite their own ruin. By weaponizing the fear of social contagion, the state effectively transforms ordinary citizens into passive bystanders, cementing its impunity.

Speaker biography:

Dr Fikret Demirçivi is a victimologist specializing in state crime, political imprisonment, and victim resistance. He earned his PhD from Ghent University, where his doctoral research explored the lived experiences of victims of state repression amid democratic backsliding in Türkiye. Currently a Researcher at the Brussels-based human rights NGO Solidarity with Others, his work focuses on arbitrary detention and reproductive oppression, victim resistance, reparations, and how victim narratives intersect with radicalization.



Session 3, Panel 6: Understanding hate online

Everyday Offence: The Overlooked Side of Online Communication

Dr Tahmineh Tayebi¹, Dr Vahid Parvaresh²

¹Aston University, Birmingham, United Kingdom, ²Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge, United Kingdom

Current debates in society increasingly focus on what should be considered unacceptable or harmful language online. There is often uncertainty about where the boundaries lie between something that is merely offensive, something that is harmful, and what legally counts as hate speech. Against this backdrop, it becomes important to look more closely at how such expressions play out in everyday digital interactions. While clear cases of hate speech have been widely studied, the more common forms of everyday offence remain underexplored. These forms matter because they can normalise prejudice, reinforce social divisions and create conditions in which more extreme forms of harm can emerge. Our presentation addresses this issue by examining the continuum of offensive expressions that sit below the level of hate speech but still contribute to a discriminatory environment.

To explore this area, we analyse a set of comments that social media content creators themselves labelled as offensive. This bottom-up approach allows us to examine how harmful language is expressed in real interactions, rather than relying solely on legal or institutional categories. Using corpus linguistic methods together with discourse-pragmatic analysis, we identify recurring words, patterns and strategies in the data. Our findings show that offensive comments draw on a wide range of themes. We also identify a clear continuum: from direct, explicit insults to more indirect, sarcastic or playful forms that rely on context or shared cultural knowledge. These indirect forms can still have harmful effects, even if they are less visible.

By mapping this continuum and the linguistic strategies involved, our study offers clearer evidence of how everyday offensive language operates and how it contributes to harm beyond the most extreme cases.



Speaker biographies:

Tahmineh Tayebi is a Senior Lecturer in Forensic Linguistics at Aston University, UK.

Her research interests lie at the intersection of pragmatics, (im)politeness theory, corpus linguistics and forensic linguistics. She specialises in online offensive language, abuse and hate speech, with a particular focus on how language is used to cause harm and the broader legal and social implications of such communication.

Vahid Parvaresh is Associate Professor of Linguistics at Anglia Ruskin University, UK.

His research focuses on language aggression, hate speech and impoliteness. His work is rooted in pragmatics, with a particular emphasis on how meaning is both shaped by and shapes what is said, alongside its social, moral and contextual foundations.



Session 3, Panel 6: Understanding hate online

Beyond the Explicit: Characterizing Direct and Indirect Online Hate Speech Targeting Marginalized Groups in Portugal

Dr Rita Guerra¹, Dr Paula Carvalho²

¹Centro de Investigação e Intervenção Social (CIS_iscte), Lisboa, Portugal,

²Universidade de Aveiro, Centro de Línguas, Literaturas e Culturas, Portugal

In 2025, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance reported “a sharp rise in hate speech, predominantly targeting migrants, Roma, LGBTI and Black people,” alongside increased “racist hate-motivated violence” in Portugal. Research in the UK, Spain, and the US shows temporal correlations between online hate speech (OHS) and offline hate crimes against minority groups (e.g., Williams et al., 2020; Bozhidarova et al., 2023). As OHS is a crucial predictor of hate crimes, identifying its features and varied forms of expression is essential.

The kNowHATE project (CERV2021EQUAL) adopted a comprehensive approach to characterize OHS directed at racialized, migrant, and LGBTI+ communities in Portugal. Drawing on the Council of Europe’s definition (CM/Rec/2022/16) and informed by social psychological and linguistic research, OHS is defined as bias-motivated, derogatory language that spreads, incites, promotes, or justifies hatred, exclusion, or violence toward groups or individuals based on group membership. We distinguished between direct OHS (explicit insults, derogatory terms, inflammatory language) and indirect OHS (expressions whose hateful meaning must be pragmatically inferred from social and historical context).

Using insights from social psychology and language sciences, we identified core social-psychological and linguistic-discursive features of OHS on data retrieved from YouTube and Twitter/X. Analyses of two annotated corpora—24,739 YouTube comments and 29,758 contextualized tweets from 2,775 conversations—showed that: (i) OHS is predominantly subtle, taking indirect forms; (ii) stereotypes, threats, and dehumanization were common discursive strategies; (iii) emotions, often overlooked in



OHS corpora, varied by target group; (iv) the deployment of discursive strategies, including realistic and symbolic threats, is influenced by both the targeted community and the platform; (v) the emotions and strategies mobilized in OHS co-occur with specific rhetorical devices and fallacies.

These findings shed light on the complexity of OHS and underscore the need for interdisciplinary, context-specific, and culturally sensitive approaches to understanding and addressing this phenomenon.

Speaker biographies:

Dr Rita Guerra is a Senior Researcher at the Centre for Psychological Research and Social Intervention (Cis_Iscte). She is a leading author in the field of intergroup relations, with a special focus on prejudice, collective narcissism, and hate speech. She is a Fellow of the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI) and a member of the Executive Committee of the International Contact Research Network.

Paula Carvalho (Ph.D., University of Lisbon) is a Assistant Professor at Universidade de Aveiro, and a Researcher at Centro de Línguas, Literaturas e Culturas . Her research interests include corpus linguistics, analysis and detection of information disorder on social media, including hate speech and conspiracy theories.



Session 3, Panel 6: Understanding hate online

Antisemitism and Islamophobia in online far-right subcultures: A cross-disciplinary approach to understanding online hate on TikTok and X

Nanna Ellen Amer

University Of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark

Antisemitism and Islamophobia proliferate within far-right subcultures, and especially in online media. This paper investigates the dynamic interplay between contemporary antisemitism and Islamophobia within far-right communities on TikTok and X. While existing literature often examines online antisemitism and Islamophobia in isolation, this study explores their relationality by adopting a cross-disciplinary perspective that bridges new media studies and historical studies on racialization. The aim of the study is twofold: Firstly, It introduces a new theoretical framework on how to approach 'techno-discursive affordances' on social media as 'meaning positions' drawing on Adrienne Shaw and Stuart Hall, and secondly, it uses this framework as a point of entry to analyze how antisemitism and Islamophobia are articulated and related within far-right communities on social media. The study is based on 423 posts from TikTok and X collected between January 2025 and March 2026 using a digital ethnographic approach. The study finds that digital architecture and the creativity of far-right cultures are affecting the articulation and relationality of antisemitism and Islamophobia. Antisemitic and Islamophobic ideas are co-created, mixed, and spread in new and still more twisted ways. Further, the analysis demonstrates how techno-discursive affordances facilitate the merging of Jews and Muslims into a singular, common enemy through Great Replacement theories driven by conspiratorial racialization. By synthesizing historical racialization processes with contemporary social media logics, the article argues that techno-discursive affordances do not merely transmit hate but actively shape the mythological construction of the "Other" in a mediatized society.

Speaker biography:

Nanna Ellen Amer is currently a PhD Fellow at Minority Studies at the University of Copenhagen. She researches antisemitism and Islamophobia in online transnational



far-right communities. She holds a BA in Religious Studies and an MA in Sociology of Religion.



Session 4, Panel 1: Criminalisation of hate speech

Fighting hate speech, protecting hateful speech

Prof Massimo Durante. Dott. Jacopo Ciani Sciolla

Law Department, Turin University, Torino, Italy

We must distinguish hate speech from hateful speech. Hate speech is discourse aimed at destroying the other, while hateful speech challenges us, unsettling our certainties and forcing us to re-examine beliefs, opinions, and value systems. Often directed at entrenched or dominant forms of power, hateful speech provokes strong reactions because it embodies the act of speaking truth to power (Lynch 2025). Thus, while hate speech must be opposed, hateful speech should be protected. This distinction calls for a rethinking of the politics of hate speech. Hate speech is not only discourse expressing animosity or inciting violence; it also undermines dialogue by denying the other the role of a real interlocutor (Durante 2015). Importantly, the interlocutor is often the source of hateful speech rather than merely the target of hate speech. From a legal and political perspective, the task is not merely to combat hate speech but to restore the conditions in which free and equal interlocutors can engage meaningfully. Hate speech is today amplified by economic and political incentives. It is commodified, circulated, and rewarded, often marginalizing hateful speech, which is essential for deliberative democracy. Social media algorithms, for example, can both amplify hate speech and promote non-hateful content to reduce complaints, conflicts, or political debates. Therefore, addressing hate speech requires more than content restraint; it demands critical scrutiny of the structural incentives behind its production. A new ecology of the public sphere is necessary, as platforms increasingly do not view speech in terms of rights (Balkin 2021; 2023). One of the most significant effects of information disorder is generating fear among targets, leading to self-censorship, or self-exclusion from discourse. Self-censorship, being largely invisible and unrecognized, is a greater threat to democracy than overt censorship. Formulaically, hateful speech is silenced through self-censorship to avoid becoming the target of hate speech.

Speaker biography:

Massimo Durante is Full Professor in Philosophy of Law and Legal Informatics at the Department of Law, University of Turin. He holds a joint Ph.D. in Philosophy of Law, Department



of Law, University of Turin, and in Moral Philosophy, Faculty of Philosophy, Paris IV Sorbonne. Vice-director of the Joint International Doctoral (Phd) degree in “Law, Science, and Technology” at the University of Bologna. He is Faculty Fellow of the Nexa Center for Internet and Society at the Politecnico of Turin and Director of the Master in Digital innovation and Legal Compliance at the Department of Law, University of Turin. Author of several books, he has widely published papers in Italian, English and French, he is Editor-in-chief of the Philosophical Studies Series, Springer. His main interests are law and technology, information ethics, digital governance, privacy and data protection law, AI & law. His last book, *Computational Power. The Impact of ICT on Law, Society and Knowledge*, has been published by Routledge, 2021.

Jacopo Ciani Sciolla is a Researcher (RTD-A) in Philosophy of Law and Legal Informatics at the Department of Law, University of Turin, where he teaches Legal Informatics and runs seminars focused on environmental sustainability, product marketing, and related regulatory challenges. Ph.D. in Intellectual Property and Competition Law at the Department of Law of the University of Milan, his main interest are digital innovation, law and technology, AI & law, intellectual property and environmental governance and communication. Author of several books, he has widely published papers in Italian and English. His last book, *Ecodesign. The Philosophical and Legal Challenges of Sustainable Design*, Mimesis, 2024, examines the philosophical, legal, and regulatory issues surrounding sustainable design and the ecological transition.



Session 4, Panel 1: Criminalisation of hate speech

When Hate Speech is Hate Crime: Identifying and Sanctioning Severe Forms of Hate Speech

Dr Audrey Fino

University Of Groningen, Groningen, Netherlands

A short but salient paragraph in the Council of Europe (COE)'s Recommendation on Combating Hate Speech (Recommendation) suggests a number of factors to be considered to distinguish between criminal and non-criminal hate speech (Test) (CM/Rec(2022)16 on Combating Hate Speech, Annex, para 4). It also includes a non-exhaustive list of hate speech that is severe enough to be criminalised under national criminal laws (Criminal Hate Speech) (Recommendation, Annex, para 11). Being a policy paper, the Recommendation is not expected to lay down detailed legal definitions. It nonetheless still requires national legislators, policy-makers and practitioners to attempt a judicial-like test to identify Criminal Hate Speech and to define it at law (Recommendation, Annex, paras 4,11). This paper seeks to contribute to the operationalisation of the Recommendation by providing legal guidance on the Test and the legal definitions of some forms of Criminal Hate Speech.

It first situates the Recommendation against the broader legal system in which it exists, international law (See also Recommendation, Preamble, paras 11, 20 and para 4). Much has already been written on hate speech under the COE legal system (E.g. N. Alkiviadou, Hate Speech and the European Court of Human Rights (Routledge 2025)). Instead, adding a further dimension, this paper relies on international human rights, criminal and humanitarian law to flesh out the Test and the definitions of Criminal Hate Speech, for instance, public incitement and threats. In so doing, international law is used to fill gaps and as an interpretative aid to the Recommendation. The paper should assist practitioners in law and other disciplines who have similarly grappled with defining hate speech and identifying Criminal Hate Speech (E.g. R. A. Wilson, Incitement on Trial (CUP 2017)). It ensures more standardised operationalisation of the Recommendation across States, thus enhancing harmonisation of the law.



Speaker biography:

Dr Audrey Fino is Assistant Professor of International Law at the University of Groningen where she lectures on international human rights, humanitarian and criminal law. She holds a PhD cum laude in International Law. Dr Fino has extensive practical experience at the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the Extraordinary Chambers for the Courts of Cambodia. She was inhouse counsel for an international corporation and advised non-governmental and other organisations on a variety of legal issues, including prevention of torture, international crimes and implementing national action plans against racial discrimination, hate speech and hate crime. Dr Fino is well-published.



Session 4, Panel 1: Criminalisation of hate speech

Cross-border Impacts of Hate Speech and Hate Crime: How to Mitigate Harm Emanating from Another Jurisdiction

Abdulkerim Balci

Human Rights Solidarity, London, United Kingdom

While CM/Rec(2022)16 and CM/Rec(2024)4 acknowledge the transnational dynamics of hate speech and hate crime—particularly through their emphasis on online dissemination and international cooperation—they fall short of developing a doctrinal framework capable of addressing the cross-border impacts of such harms or of establishing mechanisms for their mitigation. This limitation is particularly evident in cases where state authorities or official institutions are directly or indirectly involved in the dissemination of hate narratives targeting specific social groups or individuals. Although the Recommendations promote coordinated responses, they remain largely grounded in state-centric models of implementation, thereby leaving a significant normative gap regarding responsibility for harms that originate in one jurisdiction but produce tangible consequences in another.

The proposed paper examines this gap through a case study of state-promoted and state-endorsed hate speech and hate crimes directed at the Hizmet Movement in Turkey. It analyses how such narratives, disseminated through domestic media channels, acquire transnational impact through their incorporation into international financial risk intelligence databases, including World-Check, Bloomberg, and LexisNexis. Originally designed to combat money laundering and the financing of terrorism, these systems may inadvertently reproduce and amplify politically motivated or discriminatory content, thereby functioning as indirect mechanisms of cross-border financial exclusion and social stigmatisation.

Drawing on documented cases, the paper demonstrates how individuals associated—whether accurately or by imputation—with the movement experience concrete adverse consequences, including the closure of bank accounts, removal from platforms such as Amazon Marketplace, revocation of Uber driving licences, and denial of access to financial services such as credit. These outcomes illustrate how secondary dissemination of stigmatising narratives can translate



into material harm across jurisdictions. The paper further highlights the limited availability of effective remedies, noting the shortcomings of both national systems and international frameworks, including those associated with the Council of Europe, in addressing such cross-border harms.

Speaker biography:

Kerim Balci is a former journalist and academic from Turkey. He currently serves as Chief Advisor at Human Rights Solidarity, a London-based human rights organisation. He is also Academic Director at the Continuing Education Department of Respect Graduate School (PA, USA). In addition, he is a mature PhD candidate at International Burch University in Sarajevo.



Session 4, Panel 2: Hate crime in the criminal justice system (2)

From Law to Practice: Hate Crime Prosecution in Serbia

Jelena Jokanovic

OSCE Mission To Serbia, Belgrade, Serbia

Hate crime provisions were introduced into the Criminal Code of Serbia in 2012 and entered into force in 2013. For the following five years, however, no hate crime indictments were filed. By contrast, between 2018 and 2025 around fifty cases have been prosecuted. The 2022 decision of the Constitutional Court further shaped domestic practice by interpreting hate crime provisions in light of relevant international standards.

This paper examines the reasons for this change and argues that it resulted not only from legislative amendments, but also from the development of policy documents, prosecutorial guidelines and continuous professional training.

The paper also addresses the role of cooperation between executive authorities, judicial institutions and civil society organisations. The experience from Serbia indicates that inter-institutional co-operation contributes to better identification of cases, improved victim support and a more consistent institutional response. The paper concludes that effective hate crime prosecution requires not only adequate legislation, clear policies and professional training, but also committed and, where necessary, courageous professionals at all institutional levels who understand the importance of combating hate crime as part of protecting fundamental rights.

Speaker Biography:

Jelena Jokanović is a National Programme Officer with the OSCE Mission to Serbia, working within the Democratization Department since 2002. Her work focuses on combatting hate crimes, discrimination and other forms of intolerance. She holds a law degree from the University of Novi Sad and a Master's degree from the University of Belgrade, and has extensive experience in supporting institutional responses and promoting international human rights standards.



Session 4, Panel 2: Hate crime in the criminal justice system (2)

Typology and characteristics of perpetrators and victims of hate crimes - experience in the former Yugoslavia

Adrian Borka

Provincial Government of Autonomous Province of Vojvodina - Republic of Serbia, NOVI SAD, Serbia, University Business Academy in Novi Sad- Faculty of Law for Commerce and Judiciary in Novi Sad, Serbia

The first part includes the description of perpetrators of hate crimes. Is this crime committed more by groups or individuals? Which are the properties of the groups and of individuals. Presentation of the typology and specificities of perpetrators, the background and social class from which they come. I will present the differences that exist among perpetrators regarding the personal characteristics of the victim. What are their main causes for committing hate crimes? I will emphasize on whether there is recidivism and how the state acts preventively and punitively on the perpetrators. I will mention the differences between the perpetrators regarding the place and time of committing crimes, as well as the origin from which the perpetrators. Also, I will explain why do the perpetrators commits hate crime and how do hate crime perpetrators acquire their attitudes and motivation for hate crime in post Yugoslav states.

The second part of the work is dedicated to the victims of hate crimes– passive subjects. Who are the vulnerable groups in the region of Ex- Yugoslavia. I am dealing with a question of characteristics of the victims, belonging (actual and/or assumed) to the attacked group. In this part, I also address the question of how crime affects the individual as a victim, but also the group to which they belong. The paper also presents the typology of the victim, the relationship between the victim and the perpetrators. The paper furthermore examines the question of whether and how victims can become perpetrators of hate crimes and how and what kind of support is successfully for the victims. Finally, I investigate what consequences a hate crime can have on the victim and the collective to which they belong, and in which situations and moments that the victim most often becomes a victim of a hate crime.



Speaker biography:

Adrian Borka is currently employed at the Provincial Government of Autonomous Province of Vojvodina - in the Secretariat for Education, Administration, Regulations and National Minorities, at the position: Expert Associate for human and minority rights (until 2018), Independent Expert Associate for Inspection of the Official Use of Language and Scripts (now). Furthermore, he is currently at his Phd studies, Faculty of Law for Commerce and Judiciary – Department of Criminal law, Novi Sad. His approved doctoral dissertation is entitled "Hate Crimes Against National Minorities in the Republic of Serbia in the 21st Century- Criminal Law Aspects



Session 4, Panel 2: Hate crime in the criminal justice system (2)

Transformations in thinking about hate: relationships, domestic spaces and conditions

 John Clayton¹, Prof Catherine Donovan², Prof Stephen Macdonald²

¹Northumbria University, Newcastle Upon Tyne, ²University of Durham, United Kingdom

Hate has often been understood primarily as incident-focused physical violence targeting a protected characteristic (race, faith, sexuality, disability, transgender identity); where incidents are public, perpetrators are strangers and responses are criminal justice led. This paper sets out how our interdisciplinary research team (based in North East England) have been re-thinking hate in Britain to explore repeat reporting and to bring the relationship between victims and perpetrators and domestic spaces of perpetration to the fore. The paper considers the relationships between those involved, including with help providers, the impacts of intersecting identities and the centrality of the home as a space in which many victim/survivors feel like hostages. Our conclusions suggest that help providers, data collection systems and institutional responses to hate need to better reflect and respond to the victimisation too many people experience in their neighbourhoods from people they know.

We initially set out the ways in which many of those who repeat report hate, are in a hate relationship: where an individual and their family/household are repeatedly victimised through a range of acts by neighbours living in close proximity. Although often viewed by responding institutions as ‘low level’ forms of hostility, impacts, as with domestically abusive coercive control, are profound for the victim/survivors’ health and wellbeing. As in domestic abuse, poor responses from help providers to repeat reporters of hate, can exacerbate those impacts. We then emphasise the centrality of the home in understanding the character of these intersectional experiences as well as the ‘everyday-ness’ of hate perpetration. We close by suggesting how this might allow us to think differently about perpetrators and the wider conditions through which hate relationships take shape.



Speaker biographies:

Dr John Clayton is Associate Professor in Human Geography at the Department of Geography and Environmental Sciences, Northumbria University, UK. John is interested in the connections between space, identities and inequalities. His research has centered around geographies of 'race', ethnicity, multicultural and racism in the British context. Recent work focuses on experiences of intersectional hate, home takeovers and the undermining of home.

Dr Catherine Donovan is Professor of Sociology at Durham University. She has researched the family and intimate lives of LGBT+ people for nearly 30 years focussing in recent years on domestic and sexual abuse; and hate relationships. The parallels in experience and impact of repeated hate victimisation and coercive control in intimate relationships has, with colleagues, been applied in their work on hate. Catherine's work is informed by intersectional feminist theoretical frameworks with a focus on how abusive power operates and is supported by social structural inequalities. Whilst she often works with mixed methods, her strengths are in qualitative research.

Stephen J Macdonald is a Professor of Criminology at Durham University and his research crosses disciplinary boundaries and applies theoretical perspectives that emerge from Disability Studies and those of Criminology and Adult services. His recent research explores encounters of day-to-day violence experienced by disabled populations. He has researched and published in the areas of 'disability hate crime', 'disability mate crime', 'county lines and cuckooing', and 'hate relationships'. Alongside Stephen's research in the field of victimisation he conducts research in the fields of disability, criminality, and desistance Stephen primarily explores the intersections between disability, marginalisation and social deprivation.



Session 4, Panel 2: Hate crime in the criminal justice system (2)

Improving the Police Response to Hate Crime: Police Officer Perspectives and the Potential of Procedural Justice

Dr Luke Hubbard

University of Law

Victims of hate crime have consistently reported dissatisfaction with the police response to their victimisation. Drawing on interviews with police officers—whose perspectives have seldom been heard—this presentation explores officers’ experiences of responding to hate crime and considers how police responses to victims might be improved. It argues that the police should focus on enhancing the quality of service provided to hate crime victims, in line with the principles of procedural justice, rather than prioritising detections and favourable criminal justice outcomes. Although procedural justice has the potential to enhance victims’ satisfaction with police responses, police forces continue to prioritise outcomes over process, despite the evidential challenges associated with detecting such crimes.

Speaker biography:

Dr Luke Hubbard is an Associate Professor in Criminology at the University of Law. He is the co-founder and a steering group member of the British Society of Criminology Hate Crime Network. He has conducted a wide range of research in hate studies, with a particular focus on homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic hate crime. This includes research on perpetrators of anti-LGBT hate crime, the experiences and support needs of LGBT victims, the nature, extent, and impact of online hate speech targeting LGBT communities, and the police response to these forms of offending.



Session 4, Panel 3: Understanding and addressing hate speech

Hating the poor, hating the Roma: hate speech against the ‘socially assisted’ in Romania

Dr Andreea Carstocea

European Centre for Minority Issues, Flensburg, Germany

People in receipt of social assistance payments in Romania are often labelled in the public sphere as ‘the socially assisted’ (‘asistatii social’). This label carries with it deeply negative and derogatory connotations, as reflected in countless mass-media news and reports, social media posts and comments, as well as occasionally in politicians’ discourses.

Following the post-1990 economic transition, a large part of the Romanian population became impoverished, leading to increased pressure on the state’s resources for social assistance. At the same time, politicians and the media pushed a narrative praising entrepreneurship and self-sufficiency, while shaming the poor for not trying hard enough. In this context, the Roma – long stereotyped as poor, work-shy, and thieving – offered a ready scapegoat; gradually, the category of the ‘socially assisted’ has become largely synonymous with the Roma population, so that the intense hate speech directed at a vulnerable social category is very often implicitly (and sometimes explicitly) also directed at this ethnic group.

While Romanian hate speech legislation prohibits incitement to hatred, violence, or discrimination (Art. 369 Criminal Code) on grounds that include wealth, social origin, race, and ethnicity, there has been limited action to prevent the intense and widespread hate speech against people receiving social assistance, either on grounds of wealth / social origin, or race / ethnicity.

I argue in my paper that this lack of action is due to several intersecting factors, among which the most relevant are the societal consensus concerning the ‘undeservingness’ of people receiving social assistance; the amorphous and transient nature of the category of people labelled as ‘socially assisted’; the ambiguity surrounding the discursive identification between social assistance and ethnicity (some Roma receive



social benefits but not all); and the lack of a comprehensive approach to combatting hate speech in Romanian policy-making.

Speaker biography:

Dr Andreea Cârstocea is Senior Researcher and Head of the Equality and Inclusion Cluster at the European Centre for Minority Issues (Germany). Since 2023 Andreea also serves as Editor of the Journal on Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe. Andreea obtained her PhD in Political Science from University College London, UK (2012). Her research interests focus on issues of social justice, in particular issues related to socio-economic participation.



Session 4, Panel 3: Understanding and addressing hate speech

Hate Speech Legislation in Iceland: Legal Developments and Parliamentary Discourse

Dr Eyrún Eythorsdóttir, Hildur Fjola Antonsdóttir

University Of Akureyri, Akureyri, Iceland

In 1967, Iceland ratified the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD, 1965), committing itself to promoting equality and preventing the dominance of one group over others. As part of the convention's implementation, Iceland introduced Article 233(a) into the General Penal Code in 1973, prohibiting public expressions that ridicule, defame, demean, or threaten individuals on the basis of nationality, skin color, race, or religion. Over time, the provision has been expanded to cover additional protected characteristics, such as gender identity. Despite these developments, the law has been applied only rarely: the first conviction occurred in 2000, the second in 2017, and only a handful of cases have been adjudicated since. Recently, parliament has proposed changes to the procedural rules governing hate speech that may make such cases more difficult to prosecute. Drawing on Carol Bacchi's "What Is the Problem Represented to Be?" (WPR) analytical framework, this paper examines how parliamentary debates and public statements by members of Alþingi have shaped the framing, interpretation, and implementation of hate speech legislation in Iceland. The analysis illuminates the ideological and political assumptions embedded in these discourses and offers insight into Iceland's evolving legal and political approach to hate speech.

Speaker biographies:

Eyrún Eythorsdóttir is an assistant professor in police studies in the faculty of Social Science of the University of Akureyri, Iceland. Eyrún holds a PhD in Social Anthropology and her main areas of research is policing in diverse societies and hate crime.

Hildur F. Antonsdóttir is an assistant professor in police studies in the faculty of Social Science of the University of Akureyri, Iceland.



Session 4, Panel 3: Understanding and addressing hate speech

The Implications of Xenophobic Social Climate the UK's Policy-Making: How the Labour Party is now led by Nigel Farage

Saff Coskun

Solidarity With Others, London, United Kingdom

Over the past two years, migration has emerged as one of the most prominent 'issues' in the United Kingdom, becoming highly visible in public discourse. This heightened attention has been disproportionately centred on irregular asylum seekers, frequently portrayed in the media as a 'crisis' in a manner that is often demonising and underpinned by racism, Islamophobia, and sexism. Such overrepresentation has contributed to 'imagined immigration', whereby public perceptions of migration are narrowly dominated by the figure of the 'small boat' asylum seeker.

The response of the Labour Party to rising anti-immigration sentiment, fuelled by Reform UK and sustained mobilisations associated with Tommy Robinson, including protests outside hotels housing asylum seekers and street demonstrations, has only normalised such narratives, leading to legitimisation effect. 'The island of strangers' speech by Keir Starmer, alongside Shabana Mahmood's the 'Earned' Settlement model, have been widely critiqued for their potential negative social and economic implications. Furthermore, the implementation of the Border Security, Asylum and Immigration Act (2025) has expanded criminalisation of asylum seeking.

In reference to CM/Rec(2022)16, this presentation aims to highlight the contextual xenophobic environment in the UK, legitimised by the Labour Party's policies. Current changes have real implications for scapegoated individuals, and many contradictions in what they are aimed to achieve. Based on the experiences of those with lived experiences, our study 'The Perceptions and Expectations of the Turkish-Speaking Communities in the UK on the 'Earned' Settlement Model', conducted in December 2025, explores the potential psychological, social, and economic impacts of emerging migration policies on migrant communities. Portions of this research have been submitted to the House of Commons and cited by the Home Affairs Committee. This



will be complemented by the lived experiences of asylum seekers arriving via ‘small boat’ routes and the discriminatory dynamics that contribute to their marginalisation.

Speaker biography:

Saff Coskun is the Community Project Coordinator at Human Rights Solidarity and an MA student in Migration and Diaspora Studies at SOAS University of London. As an activist-scholar, her work is informed by the lived experiences of migrant communities, with the aim of amplifying their voices and advancing human rights principles.



Session 4, Panel 4: Preventing hate (3)

Hate Crime and Restorative Justice in Spain: A Legal Approach

Prof Dr Beatriz Souto Galván

University of Alicante, Alicante, Spain

This paper examines the potential and limitations of penal mediation as a form of restorative justice in hate crime cases motivated by racism and xenophobia, within the Spanish legal framework. It argues that conventional criminal law responses, focused on individual culpability and punishment, remain structurally inadequate to address the systemic, symbolic, and collective dimensions of harm associated with racial discrimination and the rise of right-wing extremism in Europe.

Adopting a comparative legal perspective, the paper analyses key European instruments (including the Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA, Directive 2012/29/EU and the Council of Europe Recommendations CM/Rec(2018)8 and CM/Rec(2024)4), together with recent Spanish reforms, particularly Organic Law 1/2025 on the efficiency of the justice service and the pioneering Foral Law 4/2023 of Navarre on restorative justice. These reforms represent a significant normative shift, opening the door to restorative approaches in cases previously excluded from mediation.

The study identifies five essential safeguards for the legitimate use of penal mediation in hate crime contexts: (1) explicit recognition of bias and its structural nature; (2) genuine voluntariness supported by independent advice; (3) meaningful offender accountability; (4) culturally competent and trauma-informed facilitation; and (5) stable institutional guarantees consistent with anti-discrimination mandates.

The paper concludes that restorative justice should not be viewed as a “soft” alternative to punishment but as a structural instrument of democratic justice. Properly regulated and grounded in anti-discrimination law, it can enhance victims’ recognition, strengthen institutional accountability, and help dismantle the systemic roots of racial exclusion in contemporary European societies.



Speaker biography:

Beatriz Souto Galván is Senior Lecturer in Law at the University of Alicante (Spain). She holds a PhD in Law from the Complutense University of Madrid (Extraordinary Doctorate Award) and specialises in constitutional rights, anti-discrimination law and restorative justice. Her research focuses on hate crime, hate speech and freedom of conscience from a comparative and socio-legal perspective. She is a member of the Research Group on Criminal Policy, Criminal Law and Criminology, and has published extensively on equality, discrimination and the protection of fundamental rights in the Spanish and European legal context.



Session 4, Panel 4: Preventing Hate (3)

The ethics of combating hate

Associate Prof Birgitte Johansen, Thomas Brudholm

University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark

As hate is increasingly mobilized socially and politically, this conference challenges us to develop actionable proposals for how to combat hate. However, committing to the combating of hate, as a shared obligation, also prompts us to ask how to engage in this fight in ethically responsible ways. Combating hate is to challenge the actions, beliefs and attitudes of fellow human beings, and it can entail a push for societal changes that may be considered wrong or even harmful by others. What questions should we ask ourselves and what matters do we need to consider in order to do that in ways that are not simultaneously putting the moral legitimacy of the fight at risk? If we recognize that the aim never justifies the means, where are the ‘problem areas’, where the borders between the justifiable and non-justifiable means may become blurred? And if we admit that this is a fight that will probably never be won entirely, how to take care of one’s hopes, one’s motivation and one’s self along the way? This paper will engage these questions, not with the aim of providing final answers, but with intention of opening a shared conversation about this aspect of the combat. The paper builds on a recently published book chapter co-authored with philosopher Thomas Brudholm, included in the book *Simply Human. A Guide to Understanding and Combating Hate*, edited by Ken Stern.

Speaker biographies:

Birgitte Johansen is Associate Professor at the University of Copenhagen. She is a sociologist by training and her work has focused on anti-hate crime policy work, social effects of hate crime and the concept of hate.

Thomas Brudholm is a philosopher and Associate Professor at the University of Copenhagen. His work has focused on the concept of hate and hate crime, emotions and responses to wrongdoing (from hate crime to genocide)



Session 4, Panel 4: Preventing Hate (3)

Living Through and Beyond Racism

Debbie Allen

My name is Debbie Allen, daughter of Beryl Joyce and Calvin Clayton, they were from Maypen, Jamaica, I am a Black British woman, born and educated in the United Kingdom, whose life has been shaped and scarred by sustained racial hostility across public institutions. I am race weathered, experience insomnia, depression and anxiety after what I have experienced in the workplace and losing my eldest daughter in 2021 and my partner in 2022.

My presentation traces a personal history of everyday and institutional racism - from workplaces where banana skins and faeces were deliberately placed around the building for me to encounter, where my Black children were physically and psychologically targeted. A colleague struck my son with a ruler and sprinkled glitter into my daughter's Afro hair "for fun", a violation that spoke to the persistent dehumanisation of Black children in what was supposed to be a safe space, a faith led community centre, despite the landmark Macpherson Report's recommendations more than two decades earlier.

My story exposes how systems entrusted with protection - local authorities, the NHS, and the Metropolitan Police - have repeatedly failed to act. Police responses to reporting hate were apathetic or dismissive. Employment tribunals, which should be a forum for justice, proved adversarial, expensive, and structurally biased, silencing me through non-disclosure agreements that prevented me from telling the truth publicly. Parallel harms emerged in the mental health system. Seeking trauma counselling, I met counsellors who were emotionally overwhelmed or detached to the point of one concealer crying and her replacement yawning and snacking in the sessions, illustrating a dangerous gap in culturally competent care. Professionally, I experienced stalled progression despite degree-level qualifications and training others who later surpassed me - patterns that echo institutional racialised gatekeeping.



Session 4, Panel 5: The continuum of hate

Preventing social media platforms from promoting extreme opinions and hate speech in Horn of Africa, promoting pluralistic digital space.

Abdifatah Hassan Ali

United Nations Human Right Office in Somalia, Mogadishu, Somalia

The arrival of social media platforms in Horn of Africa was initially celebrated and seen as way of expanding access to information and freedom of expression for close to 20million users. However, recent events have shown that these platforms have turned into source of fear, increasingly becoming a hostile environment for many users in the region.

While the social media platforms such as like TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook and X (formerly Twitter) have indeed facilitated connections and networking among friends and families across the globe, they have also contributed to the spread of misinformation and hate speech. In Ethiopia and Somalia, these platforms have even fueled communal conflict. Despite numerous efforts by social media giants to address this issue, effective content moderation to prevent hate speech and harmful comments remains inadequate in the region.

This session will discuss how social media platforms should invest in, an advanced content moderation technologies, such as AI and machine in addition to human moderators in this volatile region, learning, to detect and remove hate speech promptly. Secondly it will discuss how social media companies should work closely with local civil society organizations, human rights groups, and local communities to understand the specific challenges of the region and develop tailored solutions.

Thirdly, the session will explore best practices on how Governments, civil society organizations including digital rights activists, and social media companies should collaborate on educational campaigns to raise awareness about the dangers of hate speech and the importance of respectful online behavior.



The idea is that one or some of the panelists will share experience on how similar successful initiative in other parts of the world are helpful and perhaps if that can be replicated in the region.

Speaker biography:

Abdifatah Hassan Ali is human right officer working with United Nations in Somalia office. His work mainly focuses on providing support to civil society organizations and media workers in Somalia w technical support in promoting human rights and enhancing democratic and public participation. Prior to joining the UN, he was an active human right defender advocating for promoting protecting fundamental rights in Somalia and beyond.



Session 4, Panel 5: The continuum of hate

Hate Speech and Misrepresentation as Catalysts for Ethnic Driven Violence: Cross Generic Reading of Post Rwandan Genocide Francophone African Testimonios

Dr Nicholas Osita Okolie

Federal University Dutse, Nigeria

The Rwandan genocide of 1994 is considered the swiftest case of mass murder in modern-day Africa. Minimum attention has been paid to works that portray the tragic incident as a man-made disaster instigated mainly through hate speech, misrepresentation and media propaganda. A carnage driven by outright lies against the Tutsi and moderate Hutu who were targeted for mass murder. The Hutu government in power employed official propaganda broadcasts on national radio and television not only to misrepresent the Tutsi but to goad ordinary Hutu into taking up arms against their Tutsi neighbours. This resulted in mass mobilisation of Hutu for violence against the minority Tutsi ethnic group. This presentation examines some Francophone African novels based on the genocide and found that the Hutu power ideology was propagated and sustained through propaganda and demonisation of Tutsi as portrayed in three testimonial novels studied: *Le Feu sur la Soutane* (1995); *L'Ombre d'Imana* (2000); and *Murambi* (2001). Hate speech and misrepresentation precede successful genocides. In Rwanda, the Tutsi were referred to as *Inyezi* (cockroach) and *Inkoza* (snake) which were both derogatory terms that portrayed them as enemies of the State and the root cause of every problem facing Rwanda and the Hutu ethnic group in particular. And the only solution is the extermination of Tutsi. This is the central message that incited Hutu against Tutsi and eventually triggered the genocide as found in the novels.

Speaker biography:

Dr Nicholas Osita Okolie is lecturer at Federal University Dutse, Nigeria where he teaches courses in literature and creative writing. His areas of research are in Francophone African literature, Holocaust/Genocide testimonial novels, African war novels, trauma in creative writing, ethnic violence in African novels and Holocaust memoirs studies. He is also the deputy of training, Centre for Gender Studies, Federal



University Dutse, Nigeria. A participant in the first ever Holocaust and Genocide educators' training workshop in Nigeria. He received a PhD from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. His research focus is on post-Rwandan genocide narratives/Holocaust memoirs.



Session 4, Panel 5: The continuum of hate

Direct Provision from a Hate Speech Perspective

Dr Soraya Afzali

This paper examines how the Irish laws and regulations applied through the Direct Provision (DP) in Ireland act as a gatekeeper of hierarchies of marginalisation. From a bottom-up approach and by adopting a theory of vulnerability, the paper reads testimonies from those in DP and the Asylum Archive initiated by Vukašin Nedeljković online[2], arguing that state regulations of DP go against the Recommendation of the Committee Ministers to member states on combating hate speech. These contradictions are particularly regarding the obligation of states to prevent practices that normalise discrimination, dehumanisation, and exclusion. Maintaining the DP system contributes to the stigmatisation and homogenisation of displaced people, reinforcing the construction of ‘other’ in Ireland. Consequently, anti-immigrant ideologies are further intensified through targeted acts of violence, including arson attacks on DP accommodation centres. This paper situates the regime within the Irish nationalist inheritance and discusses how far-right actors since 2019 mobilise based on the instrumentalisation of exclusionary narratives for Irish party politics. In doing so, the paper highlights how institutional structures, political discourse, and hate speech become mutually reinforcing, challenging Ireland’s commitment to the standards and protections articulated in the Council of Europe Framework on combating hate speech.

Speaker biography

Soraya Afzali has a PhD in Near and Middle Eastern Studies from Trinity College Dublin. She received her master’s degree in International Relations from the Central European University in 2018. Within her volunteer work, she has volunteered for Solace for the Children, the American Councils, and co-founded Humans of Kabul in 2013 to tell stories of the Afghan people. Throughout the years, Soraya has been part of various networks focused on civil society empowerment, including the Open Society Foundation, the Initiatives of Change-Caux Scholars Program, and the Le Ciel



Foundation. She received the US Embassy Scholarship, the Open Society Leadership Award, and the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions- Research and Innovation funding.



Extended Abstracts

Introduction

For a variety of reasons, a number of people who had abstracts accepted to our conference were unable to travel to Limerick. There were 21 papers in all withdrawn, and we offered the authors an opportunity to send us an extended abstract for distribution at the conference, so that you can learn more about their work. A small number of those authors did so, and we include their abstracts here. In due course, if they wish to, a short video presentation of the research will also be available via a link in the Book of Abstracts.

The views and opinions expressed in this Book of Abstracts are those of the individual authors and are not to be attributed to the University of Limerick, the Council of Europe, or the conference organising team. The University of Limerick, the Council of Europe, and the conference organising team accept no responsibility for any errors or omissions, and the contents of the Book of Abstracts are provided for informational purposes only and are not intended to constitute or be relied upon as legal authority.

Professor Jennifer Schweppe

On behalf of the conference organising team

Algorithmic Amplification of Hate: Regulating Digital Platforms Using Human-Rights-Based Standards

Dr Vishal Sharma, Dr Ruchir Singh

School of Law, Bennett University, India.

Extended Abstract

The current paper falls into the crossroads of two fields of study that have not interacted much until recently, the literature on human rights approach to hate speech that is well developed and doctrinal, and the nascent literature on platform governance that has had to develop fast in accordance with its subject matter. I came to the topic the way most of us in this corner of the field come to it, through a particular incident that refused to leave me. For me it was Mashal Khan, beaten to death by his own classmates at Abdul Wali Khan University in Mardan in April 2017, over rumours of blasphemous Facebook activity that turned out to be false. The case is now part of the curriculum on online incitement; at the time, sitting in a hostel in Delhi, what struck me was how thin our vocabulary was for describing what had actually happened. We had words for the killers and words for the dead. We did not, and arguably still do not, have settled words for the architecture that pulled them together.

The thesis on which this paper is based holds that architecture is the missing object of legal analysis, and the best available normative foundation for describing it is the Council of Europe's Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)16. This is not always a popular basis within the corridors of Glasgow, where some of my colleagues at CREATE would much prefer to start with the Digital Services Act, while others would prefer not to begin with European instruments at all. I take the Recommendation seriously for two reasons. First, it does indeed regard online hate as a matter of human rights, not just of public order – which is important for jurisdictions in which the public-order approach has been historically an excuse for oppression. Second, it imposes obligations on intermediaries based not upon the contingent preferences of states but on their human rights obligations; the obligations

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travel, in principle, even beyond the ambit of the European system. The essence of the argument, then, may be stated as follows: The Recommendation provides the appropriate grammar, but the challenge is in how one can adapt that grammar into mechanisms that function in legal traditions far removed from those of the Council of Europe. Three such traditions I consider: Pakistan, Bangladesh, and the United States. India, which provides the obvious comparison for me, is deliberately excluded; my chapters on India form other parts of the thesis.

Just a quick note on what the algorithm does because it is still amazing how often this is ignored. Recommendation engines are ranking algorithms which, based on previous behavior, predict what content will engage you; the criteria that they optimize for, dwell time and engagement and share-velocity, prioritize affect over truth. It is not a contentious point anymore – though it was certainly a contentious one when Frances Haugen initially revealed Meta’s own internal research in 2021 – but the key point is not even a matter of intentionality. There is no intentionality in the algorithm, only in the firm behind it. And while the firm has its intentions, they are commercial, not moral. The hateful post gets amplified because hatred scores high on the metrics, but there is no one at the firm who wants to harm the targeted minority group. This separation between intent and effect is part of why the problem cannot be shoehorned into preexisting doctrines, including Brandenburg and early Article 19 jurisprudence.

Pakistan first, then, because it puts pressure on the conventional Euro-American framings most directly. After Mashal Khan came Sialkot in December 2021, the lynching of a Sri Lankan factory manager, Priyantha Kumara, filmed and uploaded by his killers as though they were proud of it; before both came years of Tehreek-e-Labbaik mobilisation conducted across Facebook and YouTube and WhatsApp. The state's instrument of choice has been the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act 2016, since amended, most recently and aggressively in 2025. The people prosecuted under it, with depressing regularity, have been journalists, students, opposition workers. The algorithmic infrastructure has remained

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untouched. When X was finally blocked in February 2024 the move was framed as a matter of national security but read more naturally as the regulatory equivalent of switching off the lights so that no one can see what is in the room.

Bangladesh has its own model, and I think it is important not to conflate the two. The model was set by the attacks in Ramu, October 2012, where a doctored Facebook image purporting to show the desecration of a Quran led to the burning of nineteen Buddhist temples and over a hundred houses. Nasirnagar, 2016. Bhola, 2019. And Cumilla, October 2021, the most serious case yet, when a doctored image showing the placement of a Quran at a Durga Puja pandal led to coordinated attacks on Hindus across the country. The main legislative tool in the hands of the Bangladeshi state has been the Digital Security Act 2018, which was amended into the Cyber Security Act 2023, which, like PECA, has been used almost exclusively against critics; in 2021, writer Mushtaq Ahmed died in custody under it, a type of fact that should not be easy to say, but there it is. When students protested in July 2024, the response was simply to cut off the country's internet connection, not to try and figure out why things were moving in it.

The United States is the more theoretically demanding case, and here I think my Glasgow supervisors and I disagree productively. The First Amendment, the *Brandenburg* "imminent lawless action" test, and Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act together produce a regulatory environment that is genuinely the most permissive in the developed world. The harm, however, has not gone elsewhere; it has been redistributed. The Buffalo Tops shooting of May 2022, in which a young white supremacist killed ten Black Americans, was the end-point of a pipeline running through YouTube, 4chan, Twitch, and the "Great Replacement" content that platform algorithms have made consistently profitable. El Paso in August 2019. Charlottesville in 2017, organised significantly on Discord. The January 6 attack on the Capitol, preceded by months of algorithmically amplified election-fraud narratives across the major platforms. The Haugen disclosures of October 2021 confirmed empirically what Tarleton Gillespie and others had been arguing for some time, that the

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amplification of divisive content was a feature of engagement-driven design rather than a defect. The Supreme Court's 2024 interventions in *Moody v. NetChoice* and *Murthy v. Missouri* register the doctrinal difficulty of treating an algorithm as something distinguishable from the speech it ranks. I do not think they resolve it. I am not sure that the existing First Amendment framework can.

From among the above-mentioned three groups of cases, the thesis sees three structural deficiencies. One of them is transparency, since we still do not have an empirically-grounded understanding of the inner workings of recommendation systems, and the companies have developed a strategy of using the rhetoric of proprietary innovation to resist the kind of scrutiny that could give us the answer to this empirical question. Another one is grievance redress, since the current notice-and-takedown approach is inherently reactive, the internal appeal mechanisms vary widely, and the Meta Oversight Board, about which I have my own opinions, deals with a statistically insignificant number of decisions. Finally, independent oversight, since the regulators in the above jurisdictions lack both technical expertise and legal authority and political insulation to undertake such an activity. Pakistan and Bangladesh use coercion as a substitute for expertise. The US uses principled abstention for a wholly different reason. Neither of them is adequate to the harm.

The template provided by this thesis is neither Euro-centric nor, I hope, naive. Three tasks. Algorithmic audits should be required and conducted by qualified third parties with results published in terms of both methodology and outcome; the audits will also test for differential amplification among protected groups, that is, they will pose the equality question ignored by the platforms. Human-rights impact assessments must become conditions of design and deployment, with mandatory consultation in the languages of the communities affected, which in my jurisdictions means Bengali and Urdu and Pashto and Sindhi and Rohingya alongside English. Cross-jurisdictional takedown and preservation protocols are required because a post written in California can kill in Karachi within an

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afternoon, and the mutual legal assistance treaty, still the nominal instrument here, is essentially a nineteenth-century device wearing a twenty-first-century coat. None of these obligations will be welcomed by the platforms. That, in itself, is something of an argument for them.

Finally, one point on which I expect my supervisor and I will continue to disagree until I hand in this paper. The regulation of algorithmic hate cannot be left to lawyers only, but it cannot be left to engineers either, and the separation between the two fields of scholarship is itself a problem. The Recommendation provides us with the normative framework. The case studies, Mashal Khan and Sialkot, Ramu and Cumilla, Buffalo and El Paso and January 6, do a lot of the empirical hard work. What is missing is the translation, jurisdictionally nuanced, that takes the norms seriously without erasing the difference between Islamabad and Dhaka and Washington, between the Pakistani legal system and the American one, for example. This is the translation that this thesis aims at providing. This paper attempts to formulate the contours of such work, and I look forward to the ensuing disagreement.

Authors biographies:

Dr Vishal Sharma is an Associate Professor at the School of Law, Bennett University, Greater Noida, with over eighteen years of teaching and academic experience. He holds a Ph.D. in Law from Panjab University, Chandigarh, an LL.M. with Distinction from the Indian Law Institute, New Delhi, an LL.B. from the University of Delhi, and a B.A. (Hons.) in Russian Language and Literature from Jawaharlal Nehru University. Before joining Bennett University, he taught at institutions such as U.P.E.S. Dehradun, G. D. Goenka University, Campus Law Centre at the University of Delhi, Galgotias University, and Gautam Buddha University.

Dr Sharma's teaching and research span Public International Law, International Criminal Law, International Humanitarian Law, Human Rights, Constitutional Law, and Taxation Law. He is the author of *The Rome Statute of International Criminal Court: An Insight*, and

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co-editor of the 2025 volume *Landmark Judgments of International Court of Justice*. His publications include work on critical questions of international criminal law, humanitarian law, corruption, media regulation, and human rights. He has presented research at international forums, including conferences in Geneva and London, engaging with trade-related climate measures, gender and the judiciary, and comparative legal issues. Known for combining doctrinal analysis with policy relevance, Dr Sharma's work reflects a sustained engagement with contemporary global legal debates and with mentoring the next generation of scholars and practitioners.

Dr Ruchir Singh is an Assistant Professor at the School of Law, Bennett University, Greater Noida. He holds an LL.B., LL.M., and Ph.D. in Law from Banaras Hindu University, having completed his doctoral degree in 2022. His academic and research interests lie primarily in Intellectual Property Laws and Criminal Jurisprudence, with a broader scholarly engagement in areas such as trademarks, human trafficking, family law, secularism, and legal theory.

Before joining Bennett University, Dr Singh served as Assistant Professor in Law at Law College Dehradun, Uttarakhand University, Dehradun, from September 2021 to February 2022, and subsequently at Amity University, Jaipur, Rajasthan, from March 2022 to September 2022. His teaching and research reflect a strong commitment to doctrinal clarity, interdisciplinary legal analysis, and contemporary developments in Indian law. Dr Singh has published several research papers in peer-reviewed journals. His notable publications include works on unconventional trademarks, well-known trademarks, labour theory in trademark law, human trafficking in India, child trafficking, secularism, and the role of judges and counsellors under the Family Courts Act, 1984. Through these writings, he has contributed to important debates in intellectual property law, criminal justice, social justice, and legal institutions.

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As a legal academic, Dr Singh combines teaching, research, and scholarly writing with a focus on developing critical legal understanding among students. His work continues to engage with both theoretical and practical questions of law, particularly in relation to intellectual property protection, criminal jurisprudence, and the social dimensions of legal regulation.

Algorithmic Curation and Digital Hate Ecosystem: Rethinking Liability through Human Rights Law

Nishi Kant Bibhu

School of Law, Bennett University (Times Group), India

Digital platforms have completely transformed the way in which people interact, connect, organize, and engage in civil society activities. In numerous cases, social networks, search engines, video-sharing sites, forums, and other similar services provide vital assistance in sustaining democracy, promoting activism, and engaging in discussions. In this regard, algorithmic personalization and recommendation tools make it possible to tailor vast amounts of data in line with one's own interests. On the other hand, the emergence of these innovations creates an environment that makes it possible to spread hate speech, misinformation, radical views, and harassment online. Hence, digital platforms become complex systems that facilitate the promotion of toxic narratives as a result of technology-driven processes.

In contrast to individual acts of digital harassment, hate ecosystems include connected and self-sustaining communities of people who engage in activities associated with discrimination, violence, spreading of conspiracy theories, etc. Additionally, it is worth noting that such environments are not only created by people who take part in them but also algorithms that favor engagement and virality rather than democracy and human rights.

Since recommendation algorithms tend to prefer shocking, emotional, and controversial content as the one that attracts attention and advertisement revenues, there is an increase in hate and polarizing content that causes further social fragmentation and contributes to the process of radicalization. Algorithms can create feedback loops where users receive even more extreme content causing the normalisation of intolerance and encouraging negative attitudes towards minority groups.

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The main premise of the paper is that modern legal regulation aimed at resolving liability issues associated with online platforms cannot address structural issues emerging due to algorithm-driven hate. Existing legislation assumes a triad of publishers, intermediaries, and users, which guarantees protection from liability for third-party content provided by digital platforms due to safe harbor provisions. Such legal regime was introduced in the early period of the Internet evolution in order to promote innovation and protect freedom of speech in cyberspace. However, contemporary digital platforms are not simple hosts for user-generated content as they shape and profit from the information environment using complex algorithmic approaches. As a consequence, they exercise considerable control over online communication and act like governments of the cyber world.

In this regard, algorithmic curation should not be looked at merely as an objective and entirely technological process, but as a mode of governance that controls who gets what information and who can take part in the discourse. Recommendation algorithms seek to achieve maximum engagement based on clicks, views, shares and reactions. In the process, they operate through the exploitation of behaviors that could be discriminatory in the first place. This is the reason why the amplification of toxic content ends up targeting marginalized and vulnerable individuals, among them racial, ethnic, religious, sexual, gender and linguistic minorities. Although online hate campaigns cause harassment and marginalization of victims online, they may also cause violent behavior towards them offline. Violence in this case would involve intimidation, discrimination, exclusion and victimization of the person or properties of the victims in question. There are numerous examples of incidents of hate campaigns resulting in violent acts perpetrated against minority groups in the offline environment, in addition to extremism and communal strife. Violated rights in digital hate ecosystem could include the right to equality, right to dignity, right to privacy, right to be free of discrimination, right to security, and right to participate in politics. Violations of hate speech and harassment could silence the marginalized members' voices, and thereby violate the right to freedom of expression. Women journalists, human rights activists, human rights defenders, and minority groups are faced

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with special problems since their participation in society might be subject to organized forms of cyberbullying for intimidation purposes. The problem thus does not concern control over abusive messages but protection against exclusions and human rights violations in cyberspace.

International human rights law provides for a more coherent way forward than intermediary liability rules in regard to online hate. States according to instruments of international human rights law, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and regional human rights treaties have the duty to guarantee that states do not only abstain from discrimination, violence, and human rights violations, but also prevent such violations of human rights perpetrated by others. Put differently, the obligation to act includes an obligation to prevent harm caused by non-state actors.

The emergence of the digital corporation also means that there is increased recognition of its responsibility in respecting human rights. The United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights assert that there is a corporate responsibility to respect human rights, not to cause human rights abuses, and to carry out proper due diligence in dealing with any adverse impacts of their operation on human rights. For digital companies, it is proposed that there should be an evaluation of the adverse effects of the algorithms employed by the company, and adequate measures put in place to avoid the harms caused as well as remedies provided where harm has been inflicted. Thus, while the issue of liability should not be based solely on whether a company has produced the harmful content, there should also be consideration regarding the role of the algorithms used in amplifying the hate speech through amplification.

Further, the process of amplification through algorithms should be viewed as a new concept of editorial responsibilities, different from the previous notion of publishing

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particular information. Modern day platforms go beyond mediators to assume roles of architects who decide whose voice should be amplified and what story should be told. Secondly, the problem of opacity creates serious issues in terms of accountability and transparency. Algorithmic recommendations are often proprietary technology that cannot be evaluated separately. It is not known what type of content the user receives suggestions about as well as how the algorithms used for engagement rankings function. Lack of transparency creates issues concerning procedural justice and prevents regulatory bodies from analyzing the social implications of algorithm-driven decisions. Thus, a human rights-based approach implies a set of steps aimed at increasing transparency and carrying out independent audit.

Finally, but not less importantly, the problem of impact of algorithms on vulnerable groups should be noted. First, algorithms may contribute to the perpetuation of social prejudices and discrimination during moderation processes. Second, minorities face problems both with over-moderation and lack of proper protection. Indeed, the legitimate opinion of members of vulnerable groups gets deleted from website while the speech against them remains. A human rights-based approach implies that freedom of expression should be combined with equality and non-discrimination.

Additionally, the research looks at emerging regulatory regimes being established in different jurisdictions. Regulatory measures like the EU's Digital Services Act, online safety legislation, and accountability regimes for digital platforms have come to recognize the dangerousness associated with algorithmic amplification and dissemination of harmful content. This shift in regulation reflects a movement from regulating the content of platforms to regulating obligations on the side of platforms as regards transparency, risk assessment, and corporate due diligence obligations. Nevertheless, there still exists some inconsistency in several regulations, presenting problems with implementation of regulations, jurisdictional clashes, and violations of basic human rights.

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As a solution to the problem of liability from a human rights perspective, the research proposes an accountability regime consisting of the obligations on transparency, algorithmic impact assessments, independent oversight roles, remedies for users and corporate due diligence obligations. The proposed new regime does not impose liability on digital platforms regarding all content generated by users. Rather, it puts liability proportionate to digital platforms' involvement in promoting and generating profit from harmful content. To meet legal responsibilities, digital platforms need to undertake risk assessments relating to their recommendation algorithms, establish prevention mechanisms, and work together with independent regulators while respecting freedom of speech and expression.

Ultimately, regulating algorithmic hatred ecosystems requires transcending the traditional legal paradigms, which were built to address issues of the previous era of the Internet. Algorithmic transformations have resulted in the emergence of new actors capable of forming social reality, influencing political discourse and controlling flows of information in the world. Tackling the systemic problems associated with such processes requires stepping beyond intermediary liability frameworks, aiming at protecting commercial interests, and moving towards the human rights-based approach focusing on interconnectedness of state, private sector and digital community responsibilities. Human rights law offers a more balanced basis for regulating algorithmic hatred.

Author biography:

Dr Nishi Kant Bibhu is a faculty at Bennett University. He has pursued graduation in Law from Chanakya National Law University, India, Masters from National Law University, Jodhpur, India and holds a Ph.D in Law. With multiple publications in UGC CARE and Scopus-indexed journals, his research focuses on Human Rights, Constitutional Rights, corporate laws, and mediation. Dr Bibhu has given talks at national and international conferences, including ones in Thailand and Vietnam. He has judged many prominent

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national and international moot court competitions, such as the Jessup and Stetson moots, and is regularly invited as a resource person.

Mapping Online Hate during the Dutch Elections

Adinde Schoorl¹, Jordy Nijenhuis

¹INACH

INACH's 2025 election monitoring shows that **online hate, xenophobia, and conspiracy-based narratives** played a significant role in shaping digital political discourse in the Netherlands. Using a combination of AI-driven monitoring and manual analysis across multiple platforms, the study tracked how hate speech, polarisation, and synthetic propaganda evolved during the campaign period.

Across all monitored channels **toxic narratives were persistent, politically driven, and heavily amplified on high-velocity platforms like X.**

Key findings

1. Xenophobic narratives dominated all content

Even neutral search terms (e.g., *Nederlanders*) surfaced **anti-foreigner hate**, “Islamisation” rhetoric, and Great Replacement conspiracies. Terms like *islamiserend*, *buitenlanders*, and *omvolking* repeatedly appeared, demonstrating how far-right narratives permeate everyday political discussion.

2. Political actors drive or legitimise online hate

Posts, speeches, and campaign messaging by politicians triggered algorithmic amplification and created self-reinforcing echo chambers. Hate was frequently weaponised to mobilise voters. AI-generated images, videos, and even music were used to manipulate public sentiment.

3. Gender and sexuality topics trigger the highest toxicity

The LGBTQ+ channel recorded **38% toxic content**, the highest across all datasets. Much of this targeted Rob Jetten, especially following election results.

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Why This Matters

Online hate during elections is not “background noise.” It impacts:

- **Public trust** in institutions and democratic processes
- **Safety** of minorities and political candidates
- **Quality of political debate**, which becomes distorted by outrage and misinformation
- **Electoral integrity**, especially when synthetic propaganda is used to influence voters

The findings highlight a **mainstreamed far-right narrative ecosystem** in which fears of cultural collapse, demographic threat, and moral decline unify disparate forms of hate into a coherent worldview.

Policy Recommendations

1. For Political Actors

- Commit to **Council of Europe standards on responsible speech**.
- Reject hate speech, disinformation, and synthetic manipulation.
- Recognise that much online hate is politically generated and used for electoral gain.

2. For Regulators (DSA Implementation)

- Enforce **systemic risk assessments** for elections.
- Strengthen cooperation between the Dutch DSC, NGOs, and platforms.
- Require mitigation measures for harmful narratives, including algorithm adjustments.

1. For Platforms

- Strengthen **context-aware moderation** for coded hate and conspiratorial narratives.
- Increase transparency on removals, algorithmic behaviour, and political ads.
- Detect and limit coordinated AI-generated campaigns.

4. For Civil Society

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- Expand digital literacy on AI, synthetic propaganda, and algorithmic influence.
- Support counterspeech initiatives and narrative resilience strategies.
- Ensure long-term funding for independent monitoring.

5. For Media

- Avoid amplifying manipulated or dehumanising narratives.
- Contextualise hate-driven incidents and expose coordinated campaigns.
- Hold platforms and political actors accountable.

Conclusion

Online hate played a **significant role** in the 2025 Dutch elections and is deeply embedded in the country's digital political landscape. Without coordinated action from platforms, policymakers, civil society, and political institutions, these narratives will continue to distort democratic processes and threaten social cohesion.

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Social and psychological consequences of victimisation motivated by prejudice.

Joachim Häfele, Eva Groß & Sacha Peter

Prejudice-motivated crime or victimisation refers to criminal offences and discriminatory acts directed against individuals on the basis of characteristics such as their origin, religion, skin colour, gender identity or sexual orientation. This concept largely overlaps with group-focused enmity (GFE), which is based on the idea that there are inequalities between social groups (Heitmeyer, 2002). Unlike other criminal offences, prejudice-driven acts are not solely directed against individuals; they also have a symbolic dimension. They simultaneously target the social group to which the victim belongs and the social norms of a pluralistic democracy. Prejudice-motivated crimes thus function as 'message crimes', intended to generate fear, reinforce social exclusion, and legitimise misanthropic attitudes (Coester, 2008; Perry, 2001; Coester, 2017).

The number of recorded hate crimes in Germany has increased significantly and steadily in recent years. Between 2014 and 2018, for example, the number of officially recorded hate crimes more than doubled. In 2023, around 21,700 hate crime cases were recorded in Germany. In 2023, this figure was around 17,000. This represents an increase of around 27% within a single year. Offences motivated by anti-Semitism, racism and anti-LGBTQ+ prejudice saw a particularly sharp rise. In 2024, more than 6,200 anti-Semitic offences were recorded, which is an additional increase of around 20% compared to 2023. This is partly due to the sharp rise in anti-Semitic incidents since 7 October 2023 and the Hamas attack on Israel (BMI, 2023; Riaz, Bischof & Wagner, 2021). Crimes against queer people also continued to rise. Police-recorded offences against 'gender diversity' increased by around 35% in 2024 compared to 2023. A large proportion of these offences were attributed to the far right. It is estimated that up to 90% of prejudice-motivated offences go unreported or are not recognised as such (Groß & Häfele, 2021; Church & Coester, 2021). Findings from both international and national studies show that prejudice-motivated victimisation has significantly more serious consequences than comparable offences

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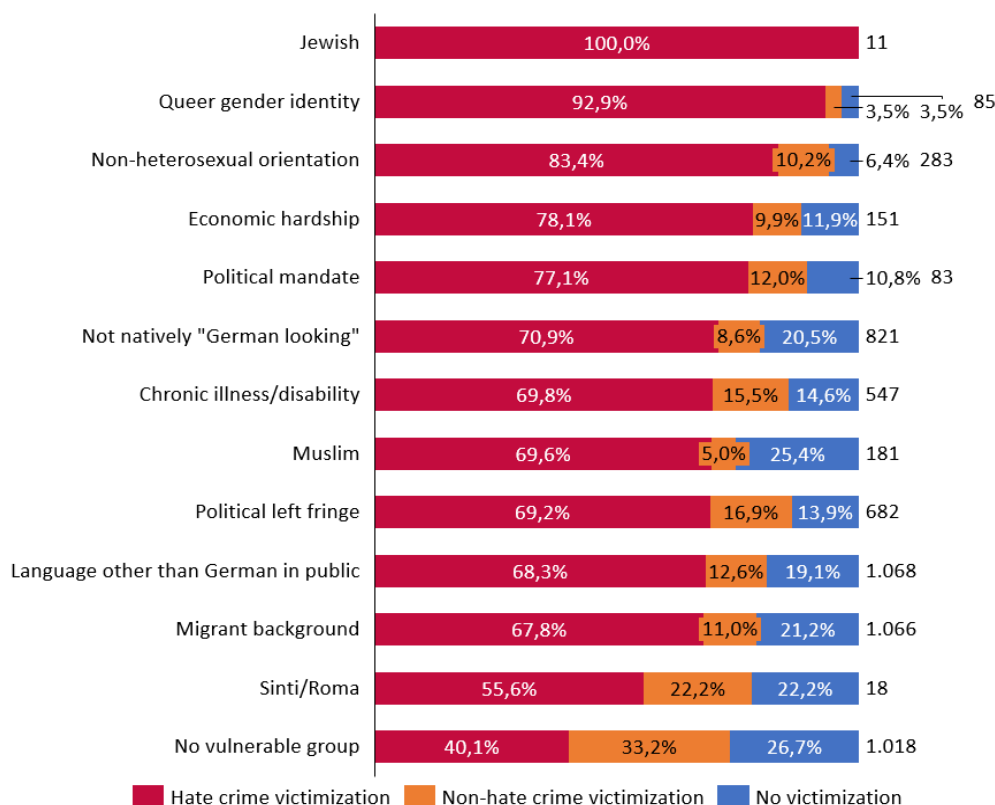
without a prejudice motive (Iganski, 2001). Victims report higher rates of anxiety, depression, nervousness, anger, social withdrawal, and symptoms of post-traumatic stress (McDevitt, Levin & Bennett, 2001; Herek et al., 1997; Ehrlich, 1992). Of particular concern is the fact that victims are attacked not because of their individual actions, but because of their actual or attributed group membership. This creates a lasting sense of insecurity and threat (Perry & Alvi, 2012).

The present findings are based on a survey of the Hamburg population comprising a total of 3,895 valid questionnaires from 96 city districts. This survey was conducted using a random sample of 50,000 individuals from the Hamburg population register. To ensure that particularly affected groups were adequately represented, non-EU citizens were oversampled. Additionally, the random sample was supplemented using a snowball sampling method, involving Muslim, Jewish and queer communities, for example. Participants completed the questionnaire online; it was available in English, Turkish, Russian, Polish, Arabic and German. Furthermore, the survey instrument was developed through workshops and cognitive pre-tests with representatives of historically marginalised groups.

The study examined three key consequences of prejudice-driven victimisation: loss of trust in the police, increased fear of crime, and identity-related avoidance behaviour. The latter encompasses behaviours such as concealing religious symbols or avoiding visible indications of one's sexual or gender identity. Stepwise OLS regression models were used for the analysis, controlling for experiences of victimisation, motives for prejudice, and various socio-demographic characteristics. The results reveal significant disparities among vulnerable groups (see Fig. 1). People with a queer gender identity or non-heterosexual orientation, and those with a visible migrant background, are particularly frequently affected by prejudice-driven victimisation. In contrast, those who do not belong to vulnerable groups report such experiences significantly less frequently. The descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1.

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Fig. 1: Experiences of victimisation among vulnerable groups



The statistical analyses (Tables 1–3) reveal a clear correlation between prejudice-driven victimisation and reduced trust in the police, heightened fear of crime and heightened identity-related avoidance behaviour. This is particularly evident in cases involving insult- and threat related offences, threats, and physical assaults. As a result of such experiences, many victims avoid displaying characteristics that reveal their identity in public or withdraw from public spaces to some extent. Furthermore, differences between vulnerable groups are evident even independently of specific experiences of victimisation. Muslim individuals, people with a migrant background, queer individuals, and those facing financial difficulties exhibit lower trust in the police and higher levels of insecurity. This underscores the significance of structural discrimination and secondary victimisation in interactions with institutions (Tyler, 1990; Geschke et al., 2023).

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Tab. 1: Stepwise OLS regression models to explain trust in the police

	Modell 1	Modell 2	Modell 3	Modell 4
Verbal abuse and threats	- 0,908*** (0,108)	-0,246 (0,128)	-0,140 (0,130)	-0,166 (0,128)
Physical assaults	- 0,526*** (0,103)	-0,141 (0,127)	-0,097 (0,127)	-0,076 (0,126)
Property offences	-0,124 (0,104)	-0,111 (0,109)	-0,194 (0,110)	-0,264* (0,108)
Bias motive in verbal abuse and threats		- 0,981* ** (0,125)	- 0,911*** (0,125)	- 0,679* ** (0,128)
Bias motive in physical assaults		- 0,532* ** (0,151)	-0,487** (0,152)	- 0,455* * (0,150)
Bias motive in property offences		-0,525* (0,220)	-0,516* (0,219)	-0,418 (0,217)
Age			0,012 (0,016)	0,005 (0,016)
Age squared			0,000 (0,000)	0,000 (0,000)
Educational level (Ref. = Low)				
Medium			0,199 (0,149)	0,100 (0,148)
High			0,370** (0,142)	0,250 (0,142)
Gender identity (Ref. = Man)				
Woman			-0,092 (0,098)	-0,074 (0,096)
Queer			-0,866** (0,329)	-0,444 (0,342)

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(Ref. = No vulnerable group)				
Muslim				- 1,009* ** (0,245)
Migration background				-0,278* (0,140)
Non-heterosexual orientation				-0,358* (0,176)
Politically far left				- 0,832* ** (0,116)
Chronic illness/disability				-0,303* (0,131)
Political office				0,199 (0,290)
Perceived as not “typically German-looking”				-0,220 (0,146)
Language other than German spoken in public				0,181 (0,123)
Subjective financial difficulties				- 0,887* ** (0,252)
Constant	7,492*** (0,088)	7,449* ** (0,087)	6,456*** (0,394)	7,117* ** (0,396)
N	2788	2788	2788	2788
R ²	0,052	0,092	0,106	0,143
Adjusted R ²	0,051	0,090	0,102	0,136

Unstandardised coefficients; Standard error in brackets; * p < 0,05, ** p < 0,01, *** p < 0,00

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Tab. 2: Stepwise OLS regression models to explain fear of crime

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Verbal abuse and threats	0,350*** (0,024)	0,093*** (0,028)	0,070* (0,028)	0,072** (0,027)
Physical assaults	0,228*** (0,023)	0,106*** (0,028)	0,062* (0,027)	0,064* (0,026)
Property offences	0,111*** (0,023)	0,087*** (0,024)	0,136*** (0,023)	0,141*** (0,023)
Bias motive in verbal abuse and threats		0,369*** (0,027)	0,328*** (0,026)	0,272*** (0,027)
Bias motive in physical assaults		0,156*** (0,033)	0,103** (0,032)	0,108*** (0,031)
Bias motive in property offences		0,294*** (0,047)	0,317*** (0,045)	0,289*** (0,045)
Age			-0,006 (0,003)	-0,004 (0,003)
Age squared			-0,000 (0,000)	-0,000 (0,000)
Educational level (Ref. = Low)				
Medium			-0,065* (0,031)	-0,023 (0,031)
High			- 0,145*** (0,029)	-0,094** (0,029)
Gender identity (Ref. = Man)				
Woman			0,215*** (0,021)	0,218*** (0,020)
Queer			0,484*** (0,067)	0,392*** (0,070)
Vulnerable groups (Ref. = No vulnerable group)				
Muslim				0,041 (0,051)

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Migration background				-0,021 (0,029)
Non-heterosexual orientation				0,132*** (0,036)
Politically far left				-0,050* (0,024)
Chronic illness/disability				0,145*** (0,027)
Political office				0,076 (0,060)
Perceived as not “typically German-looking”				0,152*** (0,030)
Language other than German spoken in public				-0,017 (0,026)
Subjective financial difficulties				0,322*** (0,052)
Constant	1,442*** (0,020)	1,460*** (0,019)	1,754*** (0,082)	1,629*** (0,082)
N	2941	2941	2941	2941
R ²	0,152	0,248	0,310	0,339
Adjusted R ²	0,151	0,247	0,307	0,335

Unstandardised coefficients; Standard error in brackets; * p < 0,05, ** p < 0,01, *** p < 0,00

Tab. 3: Stepwise OLS regression models to explain identity-related avoidance behaviour

	Modell 1	Modell 2	Modell 3	Modell 4
Verbal abuse and threats	0,108* * (0,039)	-0,077 (0,047)	0,006 (0,047)	0,018 (0,046)
Physical assaults	0,028 (0,037)	-0,069 (0,046)	-0,039 (0,045)	-0,015 (0,045)
Property offences	0,002 (0,037)	-0,005 (0,039)	-0,017 (0,039)	0,001 (0,039)
Bias motive in verbal abuse and threats		0,267*** (0,045)	0,266* ** (0,044)	0,172* ** (0,045)
Bias motive in physical assaults		0,130* (0,054)	0,118* (0,053)	0,117* (0,053)
Bias motive in property offences		0,158* (0,078)	0,144 (0,076)	0,123 (0,076)
Age			- 0,019* ** (0,006)	- 0,016* * (0,006)
Age squared			0,000* ** (0,000)	0,000* ** (0,000)
Educational level (Ref. = Low)				
Medium			-0,087 (0,053)	-0,045 (0,052)
High			- 0,236* ** (0,050)	- 0,194* ** (0,050)
Gender identity (Ref. = Man)				
Woman			0,045 (0,035)	0,047 (0,034)

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Queer			0,693* ** (0,114)	0,403* ** (0,118)
Vulnerable groups (Ref. = No vulnerable group)				
Muslim				0,231* * (0,086)
Migration background				0,142* * (0,049)
Non-heterosexual orientation				0,533* ** (0,062)
Politically far left				- 0,129* * (0,041)
Chronic illness/disability				0,096* (0,046)
Political office				0,013 (0,102)
Perceived as not "typically German- looking"				0,071 (0,051)
Language other than German spoken in public				-0,073 (0,043)
Subjective financial difficulties				0,151 (0,087)
Constant	1,708* ** (0,032)	1,719*** (0,032)	2,015* ** (0,139)	1,807* ** (0,140)
N	2922	2922	2922	2922
R ²	0,004	0,027	0,076	0,112
Adjusted R ²	0,003	0,025	0,072	0,106

Unstandardised coefficients; Standard error in brackets; * p < 0,05, ** p < 0,01, *** p < 0,00

Overall, the findings show that prejudice-driven victimisation has wide-reaching consequences for individuals and society. Such victimisation impacts feelings of safety, social participation, and trust in state institutions. Consequently, it is not only an issue of individual violence, but also a threat to social cohesion and democratic culture. Therefore, future research should pay closer attention to the long-term consequences of prejudice-motivated factors and intersectional experiences.

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Hate Speech v Free Speech: Balancing Democratic Values and Human Rights

Protection

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The balance between the regulatory framework of hate speech and right to freedom of speech and expression is the focal point of the world's largest democracy, in order to draw the balance between hate speech and expression there should be certain guidelines according to the principles which are the corner stone of the principles of Indian constitution. Hate speech also attracts the penal provisions like section 153 A, 295 A and 505 of Indian penal code 1860 herein after IPC 1860. These provisions restricts any such speech which disrespects religious feelings or promotes communal hatred in the society.

Going in the International perspective Article 19 of Universal Declarations of Human Rights (UDHR) and Article 20 (2) International Covenant of Civil and Political Right restricts any speech that leads to discrimination or violence. The famous Rabat Plan of Action is Relevant as it gives six golden principles like (1) The context (2) Guilty mind of the speaker (3) The content of the speech (4) The pool of receivers (5) The probability to cause injury (6) its impact.

In digital era new problems have emerged where hate speech, narratives propaganda, are circulated on social media platform. The major reason for such incidents are lack of awareness, lack of accountability, tracing the source of information, data breach etc. There cannot be absolute ban on freedom of speech and expression but at the same time there has to be certain checks and balance while exercising once freedom of speech and expression. The most effective approaches require proper definitions, rapid enforcement, media literacy, and the encouragement of inclusive communication to protect democratic ideals and human dignity without killing diversity. The paper will

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discuss how far the balance has been achieved by the Indian Courts and what would be the way forward.

Freedom of speech and expression place vital role in any democratic setup. It is constitutionally guaranteed to citizens of India. The Indian judiciary has interpreted in wider connotation by covering various facades of basic freedom.

Hate speech incites violence and intolerance. It threatens equality, dignity, and social harmony.

The ill effects of hatred is not new. However, its impact and magnitude are now amplified by new advanced technologies. Hate speech on online platforms has become one of the most prominent way of spreading hatred at a global level which in turn affects the peace around the world.

The founding father of Indian constitution have incorporated the dynamic concept of liberty in various constitutional provision one of the most sacrosanct right is Right to life and Personal Liberty enshrined in Article 21 of Indian Constitution. It states “No person shall be deprived of his personal life and liberty except according to the procedure established by law”.

The concept of liberty is also intermingled in Article 19 which states that there shall be freedom of speech and expression it is also a form of exercising the liberty. The point of difference between both the articles are that our founding father of the Indian constitution wanted that the liberty exercise in Article 19 must be followed with certain restrictions. Further Article 19 (2) envisages various grounds on which freedom of speech and expression can be curtailed like for example on the grounds of public order, decency contempt of court, friendly relations with other country etc.

The Indian judiciary has always adopted the balanced approach between freedom of speech and expression and hate speech, the courts are of the opinion that in the garb of

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speech and expression one cannot be allowed to practice hate speech. The court while interpreting the constitution adopts the purposive interpretation which is according to the broad keeping principles of the Indian constitution.

Indian constitution gives paramount importance to freedom of speech and expression, in fact this is also crystal clear from the wording of Article 19(1) A. There are different spectrum of Article 19 like for example right to move freely throughout the territory, Right to form associations, right to practice any trade or occupation of your own choice. All the above mentioned Rights are equally important and are various facades of article 19, after the careful perusal of these provision it is evident that Article 19(1) A is first among equals, It is sacrosanct right because Article 19 (1) A is the only article among all the articles which uses the word 'Freedom'. By use of the phrase 'Freedom'. It can be concluded that freedom of speech and expression is kept at higher pedestal than other rights.

The paper aims to strike out the balance between freedom of speech and expression and hate speech. It examines what would amount to hate speech, what are the ingredients of hate speech when can a normal speech may become a hate speech and further what are the parameters to classify when a normal speech can be converted into hate speech. Since it is also an offence then how the mens-rea and the actus-reus would be determined in case of such speeches.

A balanced strategy that upholds both democratic freedom and human dignity is needed to regulate hate speech in India. One of the most significant rights protected by Article 19(1)(a) of the Indian Constitution is freedom of speech and expression, which serves as the cornerstone of democratic administration. However, under Article 19(2), this freedom is subject to reasonable limitations on the basis of public order, decency, morality, and incitement to an offense.

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Hate Speech should be differentiated from fair criticism, decent academic discussion. There is urgent need for an exhaustive definition of hate speech. One may fairly agree to disagree on any point and this should be protected, it is the duty of the constitutional court to protect the individuals from any arbitrary actions. Indian apex court has described '*descent as the safety valve of democracy*'.

While determining whether any statement qualifies to become hate speech courts should rely on the principles of proportionality, intention and the probable harm. The balance between speech and expression and fair criticism should be measured on the golden principles. However, in the name speech and expression hate speech is not permissible as it affects public order as well as law and order, any speech which promotes hatred in the society is ultimately affecting the fraternity of the country, and one cannot through such speeches upset the social fabric of the society.

The check and balance on hate speech has been rampant because of social media and increased digital communications. Polarizing content can very easily reach to targeted audience through online platforms with one click which may ultimately lead to social unrest, social violence. On the other hand all the laws which restrains internet speech could contradict freedom of speech and expression. It is the duty that all the companies need to make responsible content moderation procedure, and there should be strict and speedy process for the removal of unwanted content uploaded on any social media platform. Various factors in case of hate speech like media literacy social awareness place active role in dissemination of hatred speech. This can be cured by awareness, mutual respect, and mutual tolerance.

The constitution aims for an egalitarian society where every individual lives in harmony and peace even the preamble of the Indian Constitution guarantees liberty of thought and expression. The Indian constitution focuses in upholding dignity, equality, public order while simultaneously protecting individual liberty, the Indian judiciary has been instrumental in protecting freedom of speech and expression by restricting hated

speech, the Indian courts through its interpretation has tried to balance the equilibrium. Attaining this balance in the digital era has opened new flood gates of the cases appropriate content mechanism and judicial vigilance is required.

This burden should be equally shared by the legislature and the executive. In other words there is urgent need to have the legislative norms on hate speech. The legal vacuum in the absence of proper legislation creates problems in the society so legislature by making the appropriate laws and executives by enforcing those laws should equally participate in reducing the ill effects of hate speech. The constitutionally permissible deterrent is the need hour to cope with the tensions escalating through hate speech. To conclude it is not only the government but also the citizens of the country who have to equally play active role in protecting the harmony and fraternity of the country and enacting the social fabric.

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Hate Speech in the Political Arena: Prosecuting Elected Officials for Homotransphobia in Brazil (2020-2025)

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Abstract: In Brazil, 2019 marked a historic legal paradigm with the Supreme Federal Court's ruling (ADO 26/MI 4733), which equated homotransphobic practices with the crime of racism. Paradoxically, this institutional stance coincides with the rise of a neoconservative movement in the country, which instrumentalises anti-LGBTQIA+ moral panic as a strategy for political engagement and securing electoral candidacies. In this context, this brief analyses the criminal proceedings initiated between 2020 and 2025 to investigate discursive acts of homotransphobia perpetrated by elected officials in the Brazilian Executive and Legislative branches. The central focus is to demonstrate how the Criminal Justice System navigates the complex tension between the criminalisation of hate speech, the right to freedom of expression, and the functional immunities inherent to these public offices. To expose this dynamic, this text initially contextualises the legal framework established by ADO 26/MI 4733. Following this, it presents preliminary results derived from mapping the institutional workflow for the investigation of these offences by justice system authorities. Methodologically, the study adopts a qualitative and documentary approach, intersecting a news media and case law survey with the discourse analysis of key procedural documents. Preliminary findings indicate a low rate of judicial recognition for the crime of homotransphobia, alongside a significant prevalence of accused officials linked to centre-right parties and conservative politico-religious bases, thereby evidencing the systematic use of discrimination as political capital.

Keywords: Gender Identity. Hate Speech; Sexuality. LGBT Rights. Human Rights.

INTRODUCING THE LANDMARK LEGAL CASE: ADO 26 AND MI 4733

This research departs from the landmark Brazilian case that equated the crime of homotransphobia with the crime of racism, as established in Law No. 7.716/89,

following a constitutionally conforming interpretation by the Supreme Federal Court (STF) in the Direct Action of Unconstitutionality by Omission No. 26 (ADO 26) and Writ of Injunction No. 4733 (MI 4733). The constitutional court's decision occurred amidst the advance of neoconservative rationalities within the public spheres of the Brazilian State (Coutinho, 2025; Pereira, 2026) and the persistent omission by the political-representative system in guaranteeing LGBTI+ rights, particularly through federal legislation. Recognition has occurred primarily through the strategic litigation of LGBTI+ groups, who invoke the STF's counter-majoritarian role as the guardian of the Constitution to promote the institutional affirmation of their rights (Gomes, Ruffo, 2022).

The ADO 26/MI 4733 case is emblematic because it directly addresses the context of violence against LGBTI+ individuals and its implications within criminal law. ADO 26 and MI 4733 were judged jointly on June 13, 2019¹, though their legal effects commenced in October 2020 with the publication of the appellate decision (acórdão). The ruling determined that homophobic and transphobic practices constitute crimes due to a constitutional mandate for criminalisation², as they are expressions of racism in its social dimension (Brazil, 2020, 2020a).

Broadly, the central arguments of the ADO 26/MI 4733 decisions established that the unjustifiable legislative inertia in fulfilling constitutional mandates for criminalisation

¹ The date of the ruling coincided with a historic march held in São Paulo on June 13, 1980. On that occasion, around thirteen organisations, primarily linked to the homosexual and Black rights movements, organised a public rally on the steps of the Municipal Theatre to protest the escalation of police violence, abuses, and arbitrary arrests ordered by Police Chief José Wilson Richetti, whose primary targets in the "cleansing" operations of the city centre were homosexuals, *travestis*, sex workers, and the Black population. The episode became a fundamental reference of resistance for organised activism as a whole in claiming the right to the city and fighting against institutional violations. See QUINALHA, Renan Honório. *Contra a moral e os bons costumes: a política sexual da ditadura brasileira (1964-1988)*. Heloisa M. Starling (coord.). São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2021.

² The constitutional mandate for criminalisation is a provision found in the 1988 Federal Constitution of Brazil, which explicitly states in Article 5, item XLI: "All persons are equal before the law, without any distinction whatsoever, Brazilians and foreigners residing in the country being ensured of inviolability of the right to life, to liberty, to equality, to security and to property, on the following terms: [...] XLI - the law shall punish any discrimination which may attempt against fundamental rights and liberties;" (Brazil, 1988, emphasis added, author's translation).

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configured a state of unconstitutional delay (*mora inconstitucional*) by the National Congress. To address the systematic violence against the LGBTI+ community and ensure an effective State response to hate speech, the STF framed homotransphobic conduct within the concept of racism in its social dimension. Relying on historical jurisprudence (the Ellwanger Case) (Brasil, 2020, p. 115), the Court affirmed that "race" is an arbitrary social construct, and racism is a manifestation of power aimed at the subordination and segregation of vulnerable groups.

Consequently, while acknowledging the constitutional reserve requiring formal statutory law for criminal sanctions (thus precluding *in malam partem* analogy), the Court adopted a constitutionally conforming interpretation of Law No. 7.716/89. This approach recognised homotransphobia as a species of the broader category of racism, subsuming it under existing anti-racism legislation until the National Congress enacts specific legislation. Furthermore, the Court affirmed the constitutional compatibility between the criminal repression of homotransphobia and the full exercise of religious freedom, explicitly exempting manifestations that constitute hate speech.

It is worth noting that the scenario prompting the STF's intervention was characterised by a deliberate and unreasonable inertia on the part of the National Congress. Despite dozens of bills being proposed throughout the 1990s, 2000s, and 2010s, the federal legislature kept them stalled for years, failing to enact any legislation aimed at the LGBTQIA+ population (Ramos, Nicoli, 2023). This deliberate omission was explicitly recognised in the ADO 26/MI 4733 ruling, where the STF stated that, more than thirty years after the promulgation of the 1988 Federal Constitution, the Legislative Branch had failed to deliberate on the legal frameworks necessary to punish acts of discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity (Brazil, 2020, p. 81). Given the recognition of the crime of homotransphobia in the Brazilian legal system since the ADO 26/MI 4733 ruling, this research proposes to analyse the perpetration of discrimination against LGBTI+ individuals by actors holding electoral mandates in the majoritarian political arenas at the municipal, state, and federal levels after 2020. It

questions how the crime of homotransphobia committed by elected officials has been adjudicated by the criminal justice system. Specifically, it investigates how magistrates have interpreted the limits of freedom of expression established by ADO 26/MI 4733 in cases involving hate speech, insult (*injúria*), or incitement to discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, within the specific context of the parliamentary mandates of elected officials.

INVESTIGATING THE MAJORITARIAN POLITICAL ARENA AS THE ORIGIN OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST THE LGBTI+ POPULATION

The freedom of expression exercised by elected politicians acquires specific contours as it is performed within a space characterised by majoritarian representation and protected by parliamentary immunities³. Therefore, this research asks: how does the Brazilian Criminal Justice System construct the notion of homotransphobia when the incitement to discrimination against LGBTI+ individuals emanates from this majoritarian arena⁴?

Following the ADO 26/MI 4733 ruling, reports from civil society and public security institutions – such as the FBSP, Matizes Institute (Bulgarelli, 2021), ANTRA (Benevides, 2026), GGB (2026), and FGV/SP (2025) – indicate persistent difficulties in classifying homotransphobia as a crime. The FGV/SP report (2025) demonstrates that the judiciary frequently interprets homotransphobic practices as mere facetious insults or conduct of insignificant harm to the collectivity.

This research seeks to broaden the understanding of this phenomenon, examining how its occurrence within the majoritarian political arena acquires specific contours given the existence of parliamentary immunities and qualified freedom of expression.

³ For example, in Brazil, the regime for these guarantees varies. Senators, Federal and State Deputies enjoy material inviolability for opinions, words, and votes (CF/88). For City Councillors (*Vereadores*), this protection is restricted to the municipality's jurisdiction. Furthermore, the President of the Republic holds temporary criminal immunity for acts unrelated to their functions.

⁴ The majoritarian political arena is understood as the space occupied by actors holding an electoral mandate. In Brazil, these are the members of the Legislative and Executive branches across all three federative levels: Federal, State, and Municipal.

Challenging Hate: Protecting Human Rights and Strengthening Democracy

Analysing criminal proceedings reveals how legal narratives extracted from case files actively differentiate homotransphobic hate speech from regular free speech, thereby establishing the boundaries of Brazilian political discourse.

The theoretical framework relies on post-structuralist critiques, beginning with Michel Foucault's (1988) apparatus of sexuality (*dispositif de sexualité*), which classified sexual dissidence as deviant "species." This is deepened by Michael Warner's (1993) "heteronormativity" and Adrienne Rich's (1980) "compulsory heterosexuality", understanding homotransphobia by politicians as a mechanism to maintain a political regime rather than innate preferences. This structure is reinforced by Monique Wittig's (2006) "heterosexual thought" and "heterosexual contract", and Gayle Rubin's (1984) analysis of "sexual hierarchies" and "moral panics", elucidating how the State rewards the norm and severely punishes dissidence.

To articulate this epistemological basis with the contemporary political context, the research mobilises concepts of neoliberalism and neoconservatism drawing from Melinda Cooper (2017), Wendy Brown (2019), Lacerda (2019), Biroli, Machado, and Vaggione (2020), Coutinho (2025), and Pereira (2025) to elucidate how anti-gender moral panics operate as electoral strategies. Furthermore, the core legal clash – the hermeneutic tension between freedom of expression and hate speech – is grounded in the critical reading of Owen Fiss (1996), Jeremy Waldron (2012), Matsuda et al. (2018), Alexander Brown (2017; 2017a), Brown and Sinclair (2020), Judith Butler (2021), and Cattoni de Oliveira and Prates (2025). These references destabilise the notion of unrestricted free speech, exposing the exclusionary character of discriminatory rhetoric directed at the LGBTI+ population.

Methodologically, the research relies on the qualitative documentary analysis of criminal proceedings. To circumvent the lack of indexing regarding the recently criminalised offence of homotransphobia, a hybrid data collection strategy (survey, screening, and consolidation) was adopted. The research cross-referenced an

extensive news media survey (2020–2025) (Seibel, 2013) with parametrised searches across the case law and sentencing databases of 35 Brazilian Courts (Machado, 2017), identifying both judicialised cases and occurrences still restricted to pre-procedural investigative phases.

AN INSTITUTIONALISED HOMOTRANSPHOBIA IN BRAZILIAN MAJORITARIAN POLITICS? PRELIMINARY EMPIRICAL RESULTS

A relevant methodological finding concerns the institutional blockade of procedural transparency. During the phase of accessing case files, the research identified the systematic imposition of secrecy on proceedings involving elected officials. Courts and police stations have relied on administrative resolutions (such as the National Council of Justice - CNJ Resolution No. 185/2013) and restrictive interpretations of the General Data Protection Law (LGPD) to hinder public access, under the justification of protecting the honour and image of the investigated officeholder. This shielding, which necessitated the invocation of the Access to Information Law (LAI) to be overcome—and in some cases, this has still proven insufficient—empirically evidences the additional layer of protection granted by the Justice System to figures of power. Currently in its final consolidation phase, the survey has secured full access to 33 criminal proceedings as of May 2026. A preliminary analysis of the legal classification reveals that the justice system has prioritised framing these political conducts as "practising, inducing, or inciting discrimination" (present in 27 cases), whereas a minority (6 cases) was classified as homotransphobic racial insults (*injúria racial*). The bottlenecking of criminal prosecution demonstrates strong institutional resistance to conviction: out of the 33 proceedings analysed, formal charges were brought by the Public Prosecutor's Office in 22 cases. Of these, only four resulted in guilty verdicts (two for racial insult and two for incitement to discrimination), with the convictions for incitement still pending final judgment due to the filing of appeals.

Another result that can already be drawn from the cases to which full access was obtained corroborates the strong institutional link between the anti-LGBTI+ agenda and

conservative political parties. An aggregate analysis of this data, viewed through the ideological-partisan classification of the Inter-Union Department of Parliamentary Advisory (Diap, 2023) based on the 2022 elections and the known affiliations of parliamentarians, reveals a clear political geometry. Considering the total of 37 party recurrences associated with the 33 cases, it is observed that the practice of homotransphobia is not randomly distributed but has a preferred address: 75.7% of the identified party occurrences are concentrated within the right-wing spectrum, alongside 18.9% in the centre-right. Such percentages provide empirical backing for the hypothesis that anti-LGBTI+ moral panic is predominantly mobilised as a political tool to unite conservative bases on the right and centre-right of the ideological-partisan spectrum.

Complementarily, another relevant approach provided by Diap (2023) concerns informal parliamentary groups, particularly the Evangelical Caucus (*Bancada Evangélica*). In this regard, the study indicates that the composition of the Evangelical Caucus in the 2023-2027 legislature comprises 75 deputies and 13 senators, totalling 88 out of a universe of 594 parliamentarians. The explicit objective of this caucus is the defence of "thematic axes of morals and customs"—such as combating so-called "gender ideology," opposing the regulation of same-sex civil unions, and defending the traditional family—aligned with a conservative moral agenda. Of the 75 federal deputies belonging to the Evangelical Caucus identified in Diap's radiograph, the vast majority belong to right-wing and centre-right parties, which also feature predominantly in the homotransphobia cases identified in this investigation. This numerical overlap offers quantitative evidence of the correlation between the Evangelical Caucus's moral agenda and the political parties whose members have been reported for homotransphobic practices.

Upon concluding the phase of accessing the entirety of the proceedings, scheduled for the end of June 2026, the research will advance to the qualitative analysis of the consolidated procedural documents. This stage will examine two central axes: (i) the

legal typology (racial insult or incitement to discrimination) and the context in which the conduct was enunciated (whether in parliamentary tribunes, social media, interviews, or religious rites); and (ii) the hermeneutic disputes materialised in judicial decisions. Within this second axis, the Judiciary is methodologically analysed as a dialogical actor between the prosecution and the defence, establishing a point of provisional stability regarding the production of certain narratives (Moreira, 2017). Grounded in Foucaultian discourse analysis (Foucault, 1992, 2002; Maingueneau, 2015), the investigation will not read the case files as mere repositories of information, but as discursive practices operating as tactics of power. The aim is to unveil how concepts such as "freedom of expression" and "parliamentary immunity" are mobilised to neutralise accusations of "hate speech," verifying whether the applied criminal dogmatics recognise the structural violence of homotransphobia or if they legitimise the political interdiction of dissident bodies under the veneer of institutional prerogatives.

Through this analytical lens, the research hypothesises that in the rare cases where the Criminal Justice System recognises the existence of the crime, the legal reasoning underscores the potential harm of the speech to the very maintenance of LGBTQIA+ political participation. Conversely, in the massive number of cases archived due to a lack of just cause (*justa causa*) or resulting in acquittal—even in the face of evident discriminatory elements—the reiteration of criminal law's structural selectivity is identified. This is because, historically forged under racialised premises and geared towards the incarceration of minoritised groups, criminal law demonstrates an intentional ineffectiveness when dealing with violations regarding sexuality and gender identity (Martins, 2023). Therefore, when the perpetrator of the crime is an elected official, this omission may reveal an even more acute selectivity, operating as a state mechanism dedicated to safeguarding the impunity of actors who hold social and political privileges.

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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

4 QUALITY
EDUCATION



5 GENDER
EQUALITY



8 DECENT WORK AND
ECONOMIC GROWTH



10 REDUCED
INEQUALITIES



11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES
AND COMMUNITIES



16 PEACE, JUSTICE
AND STRONG
INSTITUTIONS



17 PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS

