

## Estonian Human Rights Centre (EHRC)

***In January this year EHRC welcomed new Executive Director, Mr. Egert Rünne. He previously held several positions at the centre, the last of these positions being Chief Operating Officer of EHRC. We continued with several projects that have online hate component but also partnered in a new project to raise awareness about hate speech among young people.***

***Here is a brief overview of some of our recent projects and activities relevant to INACH's aims:***

- We continued to be a partner for project OpCode (led by Active Watch) and from January 20 to February 29, OpCode project partners conducted the first Shadow Monitoring and Reporting Exercise of illegal hate speech on social media platforms. The monitoring exercise in Estonia did not offer big challenges and rather corresponded with earlier findings from other similar projects. In the case of Facebook, the removal rate continues to be very high, they also respond quickly and have much stricter rules on hate speech than the Estonian legislation. Other social media platforms have much lower interaction and removal rate.

Read more: <https://humanrights.ee/en/2020/05/how-effectively-do-social-media-platforms-remove-hate-speech/>

- In April, an international project "Active European citizens against Hate Speech" started and EHRC is a partner from Estonia. The aim of the project is to raise awareness of the new generation of European citizens about the impact of hate speech on democratic participation and European values. Hate speech is often used as a tool to target different vulnerable groups, especially minorities, immigrants and refugees. It causes their alienation and exclusion which leads to marginalization. Such narratives weaken democracy and strengthens positions of far right and radical right populists and Eurosceptics. The Project is led by the Latvian Centre for Human Rights.

Read more here: <https://humanrights.ee/en/2020/04/active-european-citizens-against-hate-speech/>

- In May we published an FRA commissioned study „Coronavirus pandemic in the EU – Fundamental Rights Implications. Estonian context. “It does not include specific information about online hate but since the research also gives an overview of measures taken by government/public authorities during and in connection with the pandemic, some of these occurrences have also potential for online hate escalation. For example, on 20 April 2020, the Parliament approved amendments to the Aliens Act (Välismaalaste seadus) aimed at ensuring that third-country nationals who have lost their jobs during the emergency situation leave Estonia as soon as possible.

Read more here:

[https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra\\_uploads/ee\\_report\\_on\\_coronavirus\\_pandemic\\_may\\_2020.pdf](https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/ee_report_on_coronavirus_pandemic_may_2020.pdf)