

INACH

Report INACH members assembly 2021

This report is not a public report and for INACH members only



On the 16th and 17th of June 2021 INACH organized its Members Assembly for the second time online. Around 35 representatives of the 27 members attended the afternoon sessions. The goal of the Members Assembly was to discuss the progress of the network, and to exchange knowledge and good practices.

Day 1

The session of the 16th of June started off with a fun energizer that required some teamwork between the participants while conducting a virtual scavenger hunt. After that, the programme continued with news from the secretariat, followed by the introduction of INACH's two newest members and news from the other members. The day ended with a brainstorm session in small groups to reflect upon the future of INACH.

News from the secretariat

By Tamás Berecz, Operational Manager of INACH

- The year 2021 started with a very difficult event, namely the death of Ronald Eissens, General Director of INACH. His passing had a very sad impact on everybody but despite this loss, the Secretariat managed to stay on course.
- INACH worked intensively on coordinating and executing the Monitoring Exercise. The Secretariat thanked all the participants in helping out with the signing of the contract and doing the monitoring. The Secretariat organized two rounds of training and the first round of ME took place in March-April. More than 2000 cases were collected in 20 countries. Straight afterwards, the shadow ME took place with 6 participants, a special thank you was given for their participation. In general, the feedback about the ME has been very positive.
- The online Counter Speech Training, that was developed last year, has been updated this year. The curriculum was updated and much more information on self care and mental health was added for people who are monitoring hate speech. A campaign on social media will be run to attract the same amount of participants as last year, which was almost 300.
- INACH has worked heavily on the application of the FPA (Framework Partnership Agreement) for the next 4 years. It also joined multiple action grant applications this year. INACH joined LICRA's project application, called 'Allies Against Hate', and joined a third project called 'DIGNITY'. Finally, INACH joined a project with other NGO's and universities called No-Conspira-Hate. All of the applications are currently under evaluation.
- The Secretariat aims to publish in 2021 a policy paper, the annual report, the FPA closing paper and a digital booklet. The latter can also work as a PR package. A campaign around this will also be set up.

- The Annual Conference will take place on 4 november 2021.
- Finally, INACH is now also active on Instagram and Tiktok. Participants were asked to follow us there.

Introduction of Netzcourage

By Jolanda Spiess-Hegglin, founder and CEO of Netzcourage. Netzcourage is the first INACH member of Switzerland.

- The history of Netzcourage: Jolanda was a journalist and politician for the green party. After a political Christmas party in 2014, she woke up with a memory loss of 8 hours. In the hospital there was suspicion of a sexual offense. 2 traces of male DNA were found inside her and inside her underwear, one was matched with a right wing politician.
- But criminal charges were dropped because of lack of evidence after the hospital made mistakes during the examination. The media reported in 2000 articles about a 'sex scandal' or a 'sexual affair'. All of it had huge personal consequences and as a result of the media covering the incident the way they did, Jolanda received an enormous amount of hate through social media.
- That is why Netzcourage was set up in 2016, the only organisation in Switzerland that fights cyber violence. The essence of the organization is to offer immediate help to others who are a victim of gender based cyber violence. Also, Netzcourage offers education in schools and writes reports analyzing online hate. Netzcourage has helped write 215 criminal complaints in the last 3 years against cyber violence.
- However, Jolanda also speaks with the perpetrators to ask why they expressed such hate online. Often they drink coffee together and they apologize to her. Some of these people are now members of Netzcourage.
- Political demands for Switzerland: recognize cyber violence as violence in national law. The work that Netzcourage does should be taken over by the government. Awareness should be raised with the police to point out the possibilities to victims and social media companies have to be forced to take responsibility.
- Netzcourage wants to change the system. Jolanda won all court cases against the tabloids and newspapers who wrote about her and she has won several women's rights prizes. She also wants to refund the profits that the newspapers made by using her name without her consent, around CHF 1.5 million.
- If you would like to see the complete presentation, you can do so through this link: <https://prezi.com/view/jZ7UNCEQvMBJk6NwwNY/>
- If you want to watch a video about Jolanda's story (and of others) in german or read more about it, you can do that through these links:
- <https://www.3sat.de/gesellschaft/politik-und-gesellschaft/starke-frauen-2-100.html>
- <https://www.watson.ch/schweiz/interview/197300910-reto-spiess-meine-liebe-zu-jolanda-ist-eher-noch-staerker-geworden>
- <https://www.zentralplus.ch/jolanda-spiess-hegglin-heute-fuehle-ich-mich-so-stark-wie-noch-nie-2103673/>
- <https://www.brigitte.de/aktuell/gesellschaft/gegen-hass-im-netz---jolanda-spiess-hegglin-11682504.html>

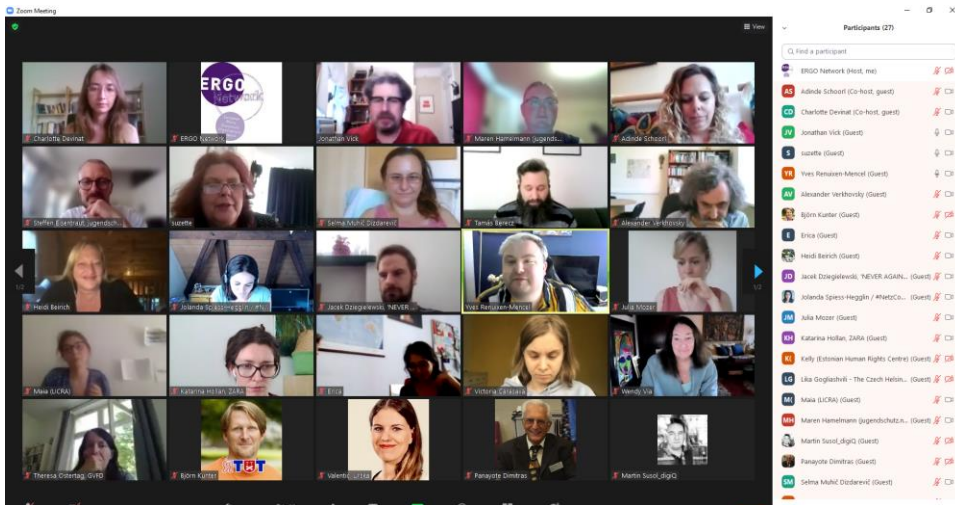
Introduction of Africa Sans Haine

By Jean-Hubert Bondo, founder, coordinator and editor-in-chief of Africa Sans Haine. Africa Sans Haine is the first African INACH member.

- Africa Sans Haine is the first African organization specialized in the fight against online hate speech.

- They are based in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in Central Africa. Africa Sans Haine aims to bring about a peaceful coexistence between African ethnic groups, who are often plagued by divisions, hatred and identity conflicts.
- Ethnic hatred is widely conveyed on social networks. In the DRC for example, ethnic hate speech on social media is a real scourge. According to statistics, Africa Sans Haine manages to count more than 500 hateful posts and comments online every week.
- Hate speech is also in full swing in countries like Chad (Northerners against Southerners), Mali (Dogons against Peuls), Burundi (Hutu against Tutsi), Cameroon (Anglophones against Francophones), Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, etc. Sometimes hate messages lead to intercommunal clashes and deaths. Africa Sans Haine was created to fight this.
- Africa Sans Haine documents hate speech on social media by recording the links of the profiles, groups or pages that broadcast them, but also by taking screenshots as evidence in case the links or posts are removed. Most of the documented hate speech is on Facebook. They regularly publish reports on the hate speech that the team observes on social media. Apparently Facebook doesn't like this. It has blocked the page of Africa Sans Haine, or rather the page exists, but they have blocked the ability to share articles there.
- Africa Sans Haine receives no official funding. They work with the means at hand.

News from the Members



- LICRA, Romea and INACH are cooperating together within the React project and are working on signing a Memorandum of Understanding. It was asked if others within the network would be interested in creating this as well. It would help

for future projects to demonstrate that many members already have a long term cooperation and have a sustainable work relation. When consortia are created we can demonstrate the partnerships that exist.

- An announcement of the Magenta Foundation: the Ronald Eissens prize will be created which will be handed out to someone or an organization who keeps up Ronald's heritage. The prize will be a piece of art and 5000 euros that hopefully can be used to further the cause of bringing the online in line with human rights. The winner will be announced during the INACH annual conference. This year a winner was already chosen but from next year on there will be a jury and you can send in nominations.

Brainstorm session on the future of INACH

Many great suggestions were given for the future of INACH, here are a few examples:

- Create a new position as dissemination officer or campaigns officer within INACH who will be in charge of raising awareness of the profile and work of INACH.
- More intentional sharing among the network of each other's work and within the network should take place. It helps to lift up each other's work.

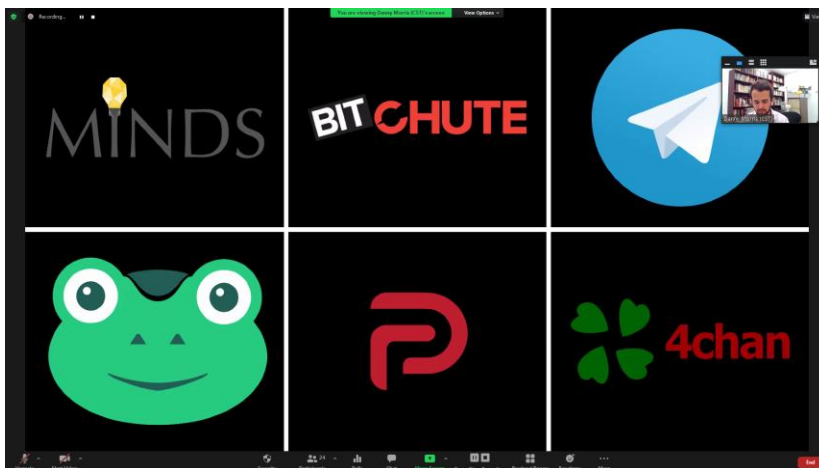
- Increase engagement within the network by having more webinars, discussions, create workstreams where members could come together to work on something together, roundtables and workshops to attract more attention.
- An effort should be made to amplify the important work INACH and the members do. Cause noise about the ME, create a newsletter, cooperate with traditional media and facts checkers on topics of disinformation and fake news.
- We should also look into harmful speech and not just hate speech, where it is possible to classify something as fake news on social media or to use a strategy of counter speech.
- We have a tool in the members area of the website, to facilitate looking for funding opportunities together. To find private funding it would be good to look into partnerships with companies who want to chip in because of corporate social responsibility.

Day 2

During the session on the second day, the participants had the opportunity to get to know each other even better during a pub quiz with questions on fun facts about the member organizations. After that, the programme entailed a presentation by CST and LOVE storm and a brainstorm session on ideas for the INACH annual conference.

Presentation 'Alternative social media platforms, online hate, extremism and terrorism'

By Danny Morris, Senior Research and Policy Analyst of CST.



- The traditional social media platforms (Facebook, Youtube, Twitter) are sort of cooperative with NGO's. They are not happy either with the existing hate and extremism on their platforms and by now have moderation plans, guidelines etc...

- However, the hatred has not disappeared, extremists just have moved to other alternative platforms. These platforms are far less banned from

cooperative and were set up precisely for receiving users who were mainstream platforms.

- At least 5 extreme right attacks from 2018-2019 on ethnic minorities are linked back to these alternative social media platforms where the perpetrators announced their ideas. A few examples of these platforms: 4chan, Gab, Telegram and Bitchute.
- CST wrote a report about their research, 'Hatefuel'. Due to the imagery in the presentation, it is not possible to publish it on the members area of INACH's website. For those who want a copy of the report, please send an email to: Yves.rm@cst.org.uk
- The far right movement seems intangible and unconnected due to the lack of a clear structure, organization and leader. But that is not completely true. There are clear links and connections between individual attacks and movements, sometimes even just in terms of inspiring each other. Often the far right movements and attacks are seen as a national issue but it clearly is an international issue.

- Therefore, the material that is shared unregulated on these platforms, and is shared without knowing where it comes from, is dangerous.
- To fight it, we need international cooperation and international lawmaking.

Brainstorm session about ideas for the INACH annual conference 2021 'Different aspects of social media'

Here are a few examples of the ideas on topics and experts for the annual INACH conference of 2021:

- More on the alternative social media platforms and what to do about it.
- What to do about fleeting content and focus more on smaller or newer platforms like Tiktok.
- Far right movements and Covid-19 conspiracy theories.
- Who are the people responsible behind the alternative social media platforms?
- AI experts on algorithms.
- Best practices of countering online hate speech.
- Transparency of social media companies.
- Issues of online hate in Africa.

Presentation by LOVE Storm on the 'online learning platform against online hate'

By Bjorn Kunter, founder of LOVE-storm



-This presentation is a continuation of last year's explanation. If you are interested in last year's presentation, you can find it here:

<https://prezi.com/p/ii0je8fstvxx/?present=1>

- It is an online learning platform developed by LOVE storm, DigiQ, Human Rights House Zagreb and the University of Florence. The website is not public yet, it is still in progress. <https://ls-beta.de/trainings-dashboard/training/520/prepare>
- Via role plays, participants can practice realistic interventions on the platform and develop their own strategies and have ideas ready to be used in real situations, even under stress. The platform will include e-learning for individual learners as well.
- The second target group is educators. Teaching resources will be developed that fit with the needs of different subgroups of educators. Next to that, an international 'train the trainer group' will be established by April 2022, a training that could also be given for INACH members.
- The 2.0 version of the platform is expected by May 2023.

The INACH Secretariat thanked all participants for their contributions and participation in the Members Assembly. The next meeting will be the INACH Annual Conference on 4 November 2021.

*****End of the report*****