THE HATE SPEECH TOOLKIT

Practical advice for people who are being harassed online

pen FINLAND

The Hate Speech Tool Kit

Published by	Finnish PEN & the Writers for Peace Committee of PEN International
Written by	Severi Hämäri, Johanna Vehkoo, Joy Hyvärinen, Reeta Pöyhtäri, Shashank Mane, Auli Leskinen, Pirita Näkkäläjärvi
Editor	Johanna Vehkoo
Project manager	Veera Tyhtilä

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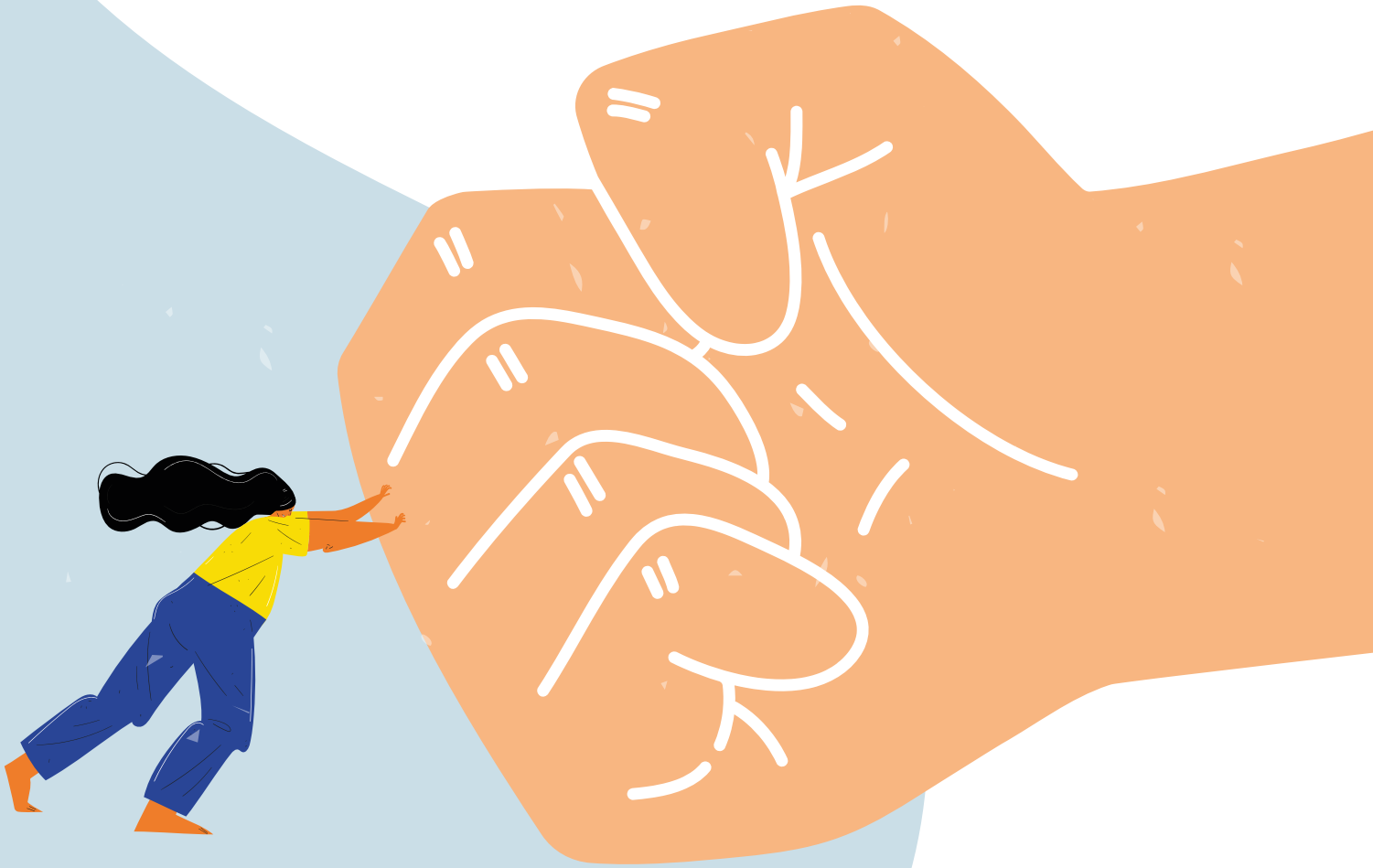


SOME DEFINITIONS REGARDING ONLINE HATE AND HARASSMENT

By Severi Hämäri

Severi Hämäri is the chairman at Finnish arts and humanities focused think tank Kriittinen korkeakoulu – Critical Academy

Freedom of speech, thought and expression are defined in article 19 of the United Nations declaration of human rights. Speech is here understood as any expression, be it words, pictures, video or audio recordings, of an opinion, idea or thought that can be communicated to another person or a group of individuals. Some speech is not protected by the right (we call this unprotected speech). Here we talk about speech that is a clear violation of the human rights of others or might pose such a likely threat. Some speech, although protected, could be considered harmful speech.

Hate speech

There is no international agreement on what hate speech is. Hate means the strong asocial, negative and destructively aggressive emotion that is felt towards an individual (who is usually believed to be a member of another group) or group of such individuals. It is also used to describe the state of hatred by an individual or group against another. Hate is not a simple emotion, and it is usually likened to disgust, cruelty and even lethal hostility. By comparison anger is emotion that is constructive, social aggression, and it is felt when a person feels that there has been transgression or unfair treatment that needs mending.

Thus, put it simply, hate speech is speech that promotes or incites hate.

It is not clear when aggressive communication is hate speech. For instance, any angry speech is not the same as hate speech and there should be room for aggression especially in art or political opinion. And it seems that certain expressions of hate, for artistic purposes or when felt against a horrible, dangerous tyrant, might be justified.

What should, at least, be considered unprotected hate speech is hate speech that is likely to cause considerable harm to such an individual or group who is likely (without external protection) not to be able to defend their rights against such an attack or its consequences. The European Union has, for instance, declared unlawful such speech that incites hate or violence towards an ethnic, cultural or religious group.

Some uses of speech in order to silence or limit the rights of others are not motivated by hate but by political, economic or other gain.

Violence and online harassment – some examples

Violence is an attempt to control actions, thoughts and emotions of another person through physical and / or emotional pain or threat of such a pain. The growth and reach of communications through the internet make it necessary to consider violent forms of communication. We call verbal violence speech that attempts to control another person by emotional pain caused by the communication. Hate speech is a form of verbal violence.

Verbal harassment and bullying, e.g., name-calling, disparaging, malicious gossip, or ostracizing someone, are other examples of verbal violence. Online harassment is the use of the internet for harassment or bullying. There are recorded cases where bullying online has led to physical violence or suicide.

Hate speech is a form of verbal violence.

Targeting means incitement of others to online harassment. This form of harassment can cause great harm, for instance by the actions of hundreds or even thousands of participants, for quite a long time, making (online) life unbearable for the targeted person.

Use of online rumours to defame is a part of a larger problem of disinformation – spreading of falsities with malicious intent. In some cases, libel laws might protect against some rumours, yet that requires ability to sue and to find the culprit. At worst, there is propaganda, or disinformation campaigns, which are systematic attempts to influence opinion through fabrications, and these campaigns can be used against individuals or groups for political or economic gain.

Although these forms of harmful speech are a threat to the right of free speech and other rights, they cannot simply be declared illegal. Governments can camouflage their attempts to suspend or even deny freedom of speech to citizens as being steps to fight online bullying. What is needed are tools to counter the bad without throwing away all the good that our increased ability to communicate has provided. ●

THE HATE SPEECH TOOLKIT

– practical advice for people who are being harassed online

By Johanna Vehkoo
Johanna Vehkoo is a journalist and author specialised in online disinformation

What to do when you become a target:

- Remind yourself that what you are experiencing is a form of violence. If you don't have to read the comments and the messages, do not. Reading violent thoughts directed at yourself can be harmful.
- Turn off notifications on your mobile phone. If your phone pings you every time someone sends you a threatening message or mocks you on social media, you will have to react to the harassment as it happens. It is better to choose when you deal with it rather than let it interrupt you throughout your day. This way you can maintain a sense of control.
- Block troll accounts but save their messages first in case you need them as evidence.
- Screen shots are quick and easy, but when possible, try to save as much metadata as you can. This means saving whole emails, whole webpages and websites, photo files, etc. Document what happened, when, and where (name of website, url address).
- If the harassment is connected to your work, tell your employer about it. They need to know if you are being targeted due to your work. Your employer has an obligation to provide help and protection to you.
- Assess the threat level. All the advice in this leaflet is not applicable to every case, as every online harassment case is different. You need to assess what kind of threat it poses to you and act accordingly. It may be advisable to seek help from others: a security expert or an experienced colleague, perhaps.

If the harassment is connected to your work, tell your employer about it.

- Is there a threat of physical violence? If so, you may need help from authorities. It may be good to leave home for a while and stay at a friend's place.
- If possible, ask a trusted person, such as a colleague or a friend to trawl through the hateful content on your behalf. Your friend can also document and save the threats and insults which can be used as evidence in a criminal case, if needed.
- Find out about the laws regarding hate speech in your country. Is this something that the police can help you with? Is it possible to take the harassers to court? If you are employed and targeted because of your work, ask your employer to help you with this. For journalists, there are unions and non-profit organisations who might be able to help with legal matters.
- Who is targeting you? Are they anonymous or do they go by their own names? Are they members of a political group or a party? Trolls and harassers often work together. The accounts may follow each other or have other connections. You might try to look for similar messages from different accounts. Are they copy-and-paste? Is it possible that the same person has created multiple accounts to harass you? You may be able to get the platform to delete the fake accounts.

What to do if your friend or colleague becomes targeted:

- It is common for victims to feel that they are alone in their situation. You can help in many ways.
- First of all, it's important to recognise that if we all spoke out against online abuse, the hateful voices would be drowned out. Many people are afraid to stand up for friends and colleagues in fear of becoming targets themselves. Most often you will find that the group of harassers is quite small, and they cannot come after everyone who defends their victims. Very often the trolls will just scatter away when others show their public support for targeted people.
- Show your support publicly, if you can. You can do this for example by posting encouraging and appreciative comments on the targeted person's timeline. You can also show your support privately by private message. Offer to take your friend or colleague for a cup of coffee, for example.
- Ask if you can help with documenting the abusive and hateful messages. You can offer to monitor and moderate your friend's social media accounts for a few days. You can help them gather evidence for a criminal complaint.

- You can report abusive comments to social media platforms if you suspect that they breach codes of conduct. Document and save the comments before reporting them, in case they are needed for police investigations.
- Do not tell your friend that they should not use social media or the internet. The web is a public space for all of us and people who are harassed should not be forced to leave it. This may not even be possible as many people's work and social lives depend on being online.
- Do not downplay your friend's experiences of abuse by saying that it's online only and shouldn't matter so much. Online abuse and verbal violence can have serious consequences, such as mental health issues, loss of reputation and working opportunities, and the threat of physical violence.

Very often the trolls will just scatter away when others show their public support for targeted people.

How to recognise the tactics trolls and harassers use:

- Black PR. Spreading rumours and false information about the target in order to harm their reputation. This can also be accurate information used in a damaging context.
- Doxxing. Finding and disseminating personal information about the target (address, phone number, date of birth, names of family members, social security numbers, etc.). This information can be used to harass the target both online and offline. It is also used to 'out' LGBTIQ+ -people, leaving them vulnerable to attack online and, in cases of countries with outdated laws that do not respect human rights, for prosecution. Doxxing is a form of malinformation, which means spreading correct information with malicious intent.

Harassers may show up at an event and film you with their mobile phones.

- Serial complaints. Trolls may also use official channels to harass you. They can file complaints and reports about you or contact your employer. This is a common form of harassment especially towards journalists, but unfortunately it is poorly recognised at the institutions the trolls are using to advance their cause.
- Troll calls. Sometimes harassers and trolls will call you on the phone. Their aim is to provoke any kind of emotional response from you. They will try to make you angry, distressed, or scared. They will record the call and publish it online. Therefore, if you suspect this is happening, end the call quickly and politely.
- Filming and streaming video. Harassers may show up at an event and film you with their mobile phones. They may be streaming the video live on the internet. It is quite difficult to stop them doing so if it is an open, public event. Try to get help from the event organisers, or simply walk away.
- Dogwhistling. Using coded or suggestive language to rally supporters who may then attack the target. This language seems normal to others, but political supporters of the speaker will understand the true meaning.
- Image misrepresentation. Using photos to mock, ridicule, harass and abuse the target. Also revenge porn and deepfakes.

Security & privacy tips:

- Make your home address and personal phone number secret. Harassers may also look for names of your family members, friends, pets, hobbies, and so on. Google yourself to see if any unwanted personal information is available online and seek to remove it, if possible.
- Make sure your browsing habits and other online communications are as safe as possible. Use a VPN, if possible. A VPN is a computer program which forms a secure tunnel between your computer and your destination. It masks your actual location and gives you a virtual location. The downside of VPN programs is that usually you have to pay for them.
- A free option is to download the Tor browser, which anonymises your web traffic and protects your privacy.
- For encrypted messaging, Signal is recommended by information security experts.
- Always use secure passwords and never use the same password for multiple accounts or services. Store your passwords in a password manager program suitable for your devices. Password managers can also be used to create secure passwords. Use 2-factor authentication when possible (on social media accounts and email, at least).
- Go through your account and privacy settings on all your social media accounts to see who can see your content. Check which apps have access to your data and delete the ones you no longer want to give access to.
- Remember, it is not enough to just do this once and then forget about it. Make it a habit to do a regular 'spring clean' of your devices. Check your privacy settings on social media accounts and delete apps you no longer use. Change passwords.
- You may also have to talk to your family members and other close contacts about sharing information connected to you. Ask them not to share photos or location information about you, or to only do so in secure closed settings.

Taking care of your wellbeing:

- Online abuse may have serious, long-term effects if health problems are left untreated. Stress may become chronic and lead to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Victims of online harassment may experience a wide variety of symptoms, such as insomnia, fatigue, anxiety, and related physical reactions.
- It is extremely important to take care of your mental and physical health when you have experienced online abuse. Talk to a mental health professional, if you can. Talking to other survivors of online abuse has proven to be helpful for many.
- It may be a good idea to distance yourself from the platforms where the abuse is happening for a while. Most attacks are over in a few days.

- Do not look at your phone before going to bed.
- Physical distancing may also be of help. Consider a short trip somewhere, a change of scenery.
- Remember that anyone can become a target. It is not your fault. Even if the attacks feel personal, they are not about you as a person but about something that you represent for the trolls and the haters.

Take care of your mental and physical health when you have experienced online abuse.

Remember that anyone can become a target. It is not your fault.

LEGISLATION AND HATE SPEECH

By Joy Hyvärinen
Joy Hyvärinen specialises in policy and advocacy related to freedom of expression

There is no globally agreed legal definition of hate speech, although some international human rights agreements deal with hate speech and related issues. Different countries have very different laws that concern hate speech.

This can be confusing and it reinforces the importance of being very clear when considering hate speech and legislation. What kind of hate speech is involved: for example, does it concern racial discrimination, hostility against someone based on their gender, or propaganda for war? What definition is being used and what is the legislation trying to achieve?

Legislation is an important part of protecting freedom of expression and other human rights that are impacted by hate speech. At the same time it is important to take into account the potential for abuse of hate speech laws. Governments frequently misuse hate speech-related laws to silence political opponents and restrict freedom of expression.

The failure of many governments to act effectively against hate speech, combined with the potential for abuse of hate speech laws to suppress legitimate criticism and political debate, creates a challenge for designing legislation.

It is extremely important that legislation that aims to tackle hate speech is clearly defined and meets international human rights criteria. International law allows expression that can be offensive and shocking, but there are limits. However, under international human rights law restrictions on freedom of expression, including those that aim to limit hate speech, must meet strict criteria, such as being based on law, having a legitimate aim and being necessary and proportionate.

Online hate speech is extremely problematic. It can spread very fast on a very large scale, causing great damage. In this context the role of states is often overshadowed by that of large online platforms such as Facebook, Tiktok and

Google, which dominate the internet. To a great extent, the terms and conditions of these multinational companies define the limits of freedom of expression online, although many states are creating new laws that aim to regulate online activities.

The enormous amount of content that users share online and the nature of online platforms create further challenges for regulation. The systems that platforms use to moderate the content that users share, the failures of platforms to enforce their own rules against hate speech and lack of transparency when it comes to how platforms implement decisions about removing or allowing content adds to the problems.

Platforms use automated systems (algorithms) to moderate online content, but these often make errors. Human moderators have a much smaller role. Automated moderation systems often fail to identify hate speech or mistakenly remove innocent content that a user has shared. Online platforms have their own rules for users, but the rules are often unclear, implementation is inconsistent and it can be very difficult or impossible for a user to get moderation mistakes corrected.

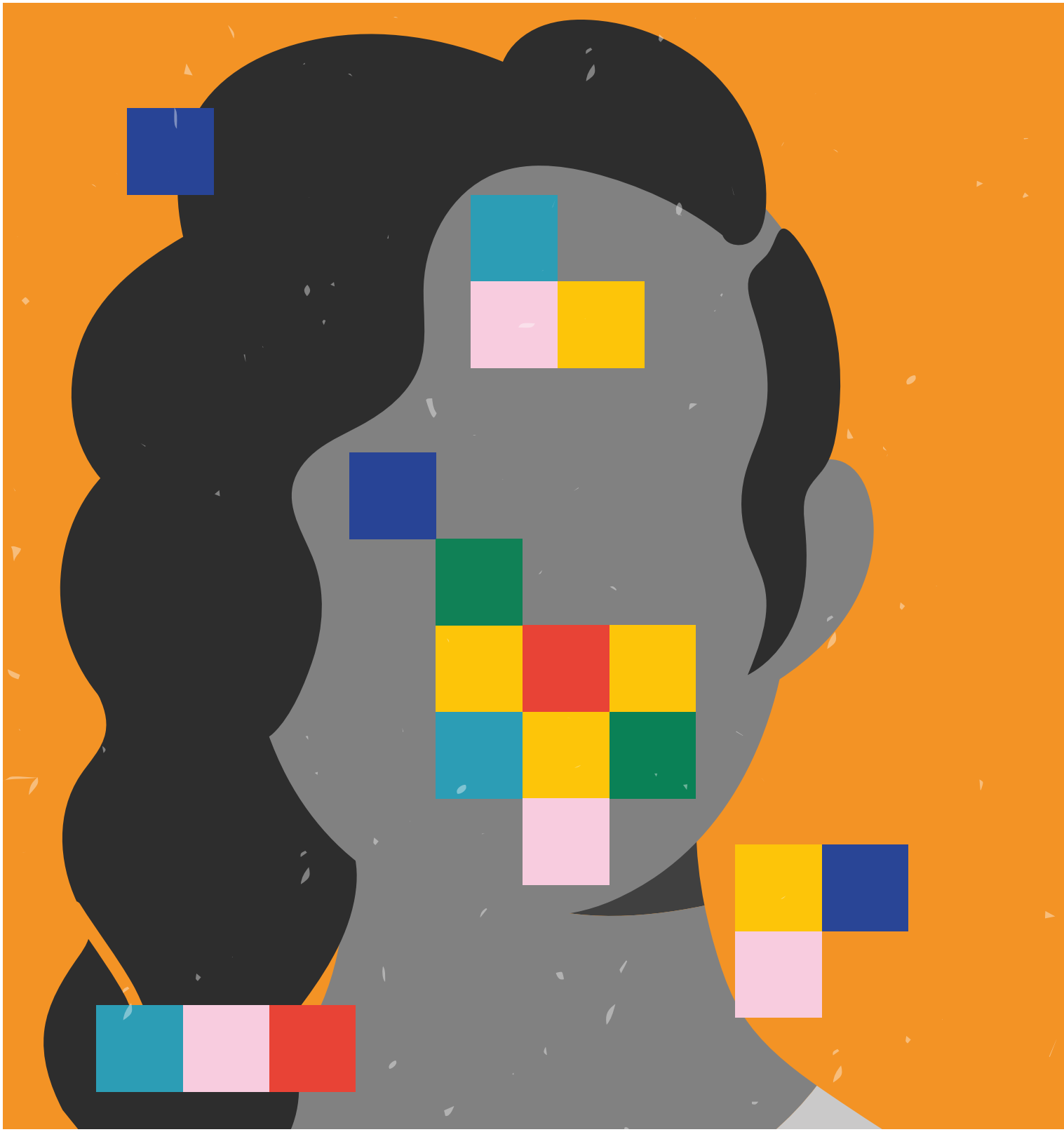
These issues mean that if legislation to tackle hate speech online is not carefully designed, it could lead to over-removal of content that users have shared. Online platforms may err on the side of caution and remove content whenever there is any doubt because they want to avoid the risk of legal consequences, for example fines, for having allowed the content to be shared on the platform. This could limit freedom of expression online considerably.

New and better legislation is part of the answer to tackling hate speech. However, in some situations more effective implementation of existing laws may be more important. This can be much more challenging than writing new laws, because it is likely to require more funding and for example training for police and prosecutors to ensure that existing laws are implemented effectively. ●

HATE SPEECH AND INDIA: AN OVERVIEW

By Shashank Mane

Shashank Mane is an Indian born writer and poet living in Finland



The qualities which had previously earned India the distinguished title are now under threat more than ever.

A country with hundreds of languages, multiple religions, and over a billion people, India has long been lauded as the world's largest democracy. However, a great change has occurred in the past few years and India may no longer stand the test of what constitutes an actual functioning free democracy. The qualities which had previously earned India the distinguished title are now under threat more than ever. Hate speech as well as religious and caste-based violence have long played a role in Indian history.

One of the world's fastest growing digital markets, India's population of 300 million internet users is surpassed only by China and the United States. Excitement around new media is evident in the huge uptake for social media networking sites such as Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter and the micro-messaging service WhatsApp. In the midst of new media growth for multiple agendas of development, governance, leisure, and politics, a malicious practice has caught public attention – the growing invective language and abusive exchange on social media platforms.

Facebook saw a total of 35,560 requests from law enforcement officials in India in the first half of 2020, and it complied with nearly 50 percent of these requests, according to the company's own report. The social media company said that hate speech prevalence was 0.10 percent – 0.11 percent on the platform or 10 to 11 views of hate speech for every 10,000 views of content.

Hate speech in India is not limited to specific minorities alone, but also targets women and weaker minority populations. Since the gradual takeover by the BJP and the election of Narendra Modi in 2014, India has spiralled into a battleground against freedom of speech and has seen violence against minority groups increased. Suppression of journalism has also increased and the harassment of journalists, including lynching and killings, are now more common than ever.

During the coronavirus pandemic, hate speech against muslims has increased on various platforms.

During the coronavirus pandemic, hate speech against muslims has increased on various platforms, including Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp. According to the author of a report titled The Contagion of Hate (by journalist Laxmi Murty), much of the content targeting muslims is presented in a false context through distortion or by altering existing footage and speeches to present propaganda. The creation of fake content to promote hate speech is common. The report states that social media platforms have done little to curb the rapid spread of hate speech or disinformation targeting muslims and other religious minorities. The proliferation of hate speech against muslims has led to incidents of aggression, arson and violence in different parts of the country.

Hate speech against muslims has also incorrectly portrayed them as spreaders of the coronavirus. The Indian media in particular have played a significant role in disseminating fake news about muslims and conjuring anti-muslim sentiment, with no repercussions from professional media regulatory bodies or the government. Finally, the report states that the pushback against hate speech should take several forms. Aside from a thorough legal framework criminalising hate speech, the government can also ban content, use reporting mechanisms and encourage citizens to report and flag hate speech and fake news.

In India, there are laws that aim to prevent discord among the many ethnic and religious communities. These laws were enacted in India to allow citizens to seek punishment against anyone showing disrespect “on grounds of religions of birth, residence, language, caste or community or any other ground whatsoever”. The lack of a legal definition for hate speech in Indian law, and the vague language used in criminal law provisions prohibiting the spread of hatred, leaves them open to misuse and overreach. •

HATE SPEECH IN LATIN AMERICA: AN OVERVIEW

By Auli Leskinen

Auli Leskinen is a journalist and author specialised in Latin American research and media

According to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (Cepal), in 2020 the population of Latin America and the Caribbean was estimated at more than 652 million. In 2020, on average, operators reported a 25 % increase in mobile data traffic during the Covid-19 lockdown. By the end of 2020, nearly 360 million people in the region, representing 57 % of the population, were connected to the mobile internet.

Given that Latin American countries have traditionally been class societies, characterised by social segregation, inequality, ethnic racism, political polarization and misogynist representation of women based on male power, and due to the long tradition of colonization and authoritarian structures in the societies, it is understandable that the hate speech problem on social media is related to and embodies these structures in Latin American countries.

Ethnical racism has always been common especially in the Andean region, Central America and Mexico. For example, in Guatemala hate speech, insults and the creation of stereotypes against indigenous peoples and women are often accompanied by acts of violence and hate crimes that may end in bloodshed.

In Latin America, social media and hate speech might sometimes become crucial in citizens' political decision-making. In Brazil, president Jair Bolsonaro's triumph in 2018 was attributed by analysts to the spread of hateful messages on Whatsapp. During Bolsonaro´s campaign, false information about polling places and false instructions on how to vote for specific candidates was also deliberately spread on social media.

In El Salvador, president Nayib Bukele initiated a populist campaign of firing public officers via Twitter during his first year in office, 2019. He used celebrity meetings on Instagram Live to discuss his policy agenda.

Multiple gaps in internet access in Latin America are linked to gender, ethnicity and socioeconomic status.

Social media and hate speech might sometimes become crucial in citizens' political decision-making.

The politically tense atmosphere in the region is likely to increase the use of hate speech in attempts to resolve tensions by violence. In Latin America, the end of 2019 was politically exceptionally violent. The human rights situation deteriorated in several countries. The wave of mass demonstrations in South America in Chile, Colombia and Bolivia was the largest in the region since the Cold War. In recent years, several Latin American countries have sought to restrict the use of hate speech through legislative actions, but the laws have progressed slowly.

Enactments have often been too slow or have been suspended, and there has been a lack of clarity in the definition of the concept of hate speech, leading to impunity. Legislation has also been harnessed in the service of censorship, for example the Venezuelan Anti-Hate Speech Act and the Nicaraguan Anti-Terror Law. In 2020, Venezuela wielded a powerful hate law to silence President Nicolas Maduro's remaining foes. Venezuela's law became a key tool for Maduro to repress dissent, particularly online.

On the other hand, sometimes social media can save lives and expose violence. Multiple gaps in internet access in Latin America are linked to gender, ethnicity and socioeconomic status. This impacts access to digital channels of assistance in domestic violence cases and lack of access to sexual and reproductive health care and information. In 2020, these difficulties have been exacerbated by the implementation of restricted mobility and confinement measures in the region.

While responses from governments have been insufficient, activists and civil society organisations have taken responsibility to inform and assist victims of violence. These organisations have suffered the impacts of rising gender-based violence through digital platforms. They have been targeted by attacks such as phishing, personal data exposure, and direct threats have been made towards public leaders, women's rights defenders, and LGBTIQ+ groups. ●

HATE SPEECH AND EUROPE: AN OVERVIEW

By Reeta Pöyhtäri

Reeta Pöyhtäri (PhD) is a media researcher studying freedom of expression, hate speech and online harassment in digital media environment

Hate speech, whether it occurs online or offline, has been defined as a major concern by both the Council of Europe (COE, 47 Member States), and within the European Union (EU, 27 Member States in 2021). In Europe hate speech is perceived as endangering the cohesion of democratic societies, the protection of human rights and the rule of law, and enhancing the risk of societal unrest and violence.

The Committee of Ministers of the COE defined hate speech in 1997, in its recommendation R 97 (20), as 'covering all forms of expression which spread, incite, promote or justify racial hatred, xenophobia, anti-Semitism or other forms of hatred based on intolerance, including: intolerance expressed by aggressive nationalism and ethnocentrism, discrimination and hostility against minorities, migrants and people of immigrant origin'. This definition has been cited widely internationally, but national legislation concerning hate speech in Europe varies. Despite concerns about hate speech, protection of freedom of speech is strong within Europe and convictions for illegal hate speech are in general rare.

Hate speech has been a persistent issue in Europe, especially targeting migrant, racial, ethnic and religious minorities. The European 'refugee crisis' in 2015 caused a peak in hate speech directed at asylum seekers, also affecting other migrant populations already residing in Europe. Islamist terror attacks in several European countries from 2004 onwards have incited hatred towards Muslim populations in general, adding to the political discussion about failed integration and multiculturalism. This political discussion has been fuelled especially by many populist and nationalist leaders in Europe, calling for restrictive migration policies. In addition, some European countries have seen a rise in antisemitism and far-right movements.

A growing issue is online misogyny, targeting especially women in politics, journalism, research and other public positions, but also women in general. Gender and sexual minorities are also being severely attacked online. Hate speech and online harassment are increasingly used to attack those in (supposedly) powerful positions, with the purpose to undermine their legitimacy,

hinder their work or to silence them. In Nordic countries, thought to be safe havens of democracy, for example police, judges, other officials, politicians, journalists, and civil society activists, have reported increased online harassment, including doxxing and dogwhistling. This has led to inquiries into whether new legislation is needed to safeguard some of the principal functions of democracies. The Covid-19 pandemic not only brought the virus, but also created an infodemic, which has made visible the dissatisfaction and distrust of some parts of the population towards official governance and information, and tendencies to use dis-, mis- and malinformation, including hate speech and conspiracy theories, to confuse the public and try to silence those in power.

There are several charters and recommendations that set out human rights standards and provide guidelines to COE member states to deal with hate speech and support victims. The European Court of Human Rights interprets the application of European Convention on Human Rights, including issues pertaining to freedom of speech and hate speech. Furthermore, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) monitors and reports on issues of racism, xenophobia, intolerance and discrimination, and has published recommendations on combating hate speech. COE has also supported the 'No hate speech' campaign online, mobilizing youth and the civil society to promote human rights and to tackle hate speech. Numerous international and national civil society organisations and other actors work to diminish the harms of hate speech.

Within the EU, specific action has been taken to deal with online hate speech. The EU's population of 514 million and households with 90% internet access, and with 75% of individuals with internet access on mobile devices in 2019, form a significant group of internet users.

A growing issue is online misogyny

In 2016, a European Code of Conduct on countering illegal hate speech online was signed by the European Commission (EC) and four major companies (Facebook, Microsoft, Twitter and YouTube), in order to respond to the proliferation of racist and xenophobic hate speech online. Later on, other internet giants have joined the code, giving them responsibilities to remove illegal flagged content from their platforms. In the latest monitoring exercise in late 2019, 90% of the flagged content was assessed by the platforms within 24 hours and 71% of the content deemed to be illegal hate speech was removed (in comparison, 40% and 28% in 2016).

Companies' responsibilities for illegal content as well as more transparency when it comes to their actions towards users are under scrutiny in two major legislative initiatives by the EC from 2020, the Digital Services Act and the Digital Markets Act. These two initiatives are aiming for safer online spaces with protection of fundamental rights for all users. Yet, legislation alone will never solve the issue of hate speech, but a broad coalition of actors and other soft measures are crucial. ●

HATE SPEECH AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLE SÁMI

By Pirita Näkkäläjärvi
Pirita Näkkäläjärvi specialises in Sámi rights and indigenous advocacy

Freedom of speech of indigenous peoples and hate speech towards indigenous peoples has not been widely studied. Academic literature on the rights of the indigenous peoples has understandably focused on self-determination and land rights: self-determination is a priority for all indigenous peoples, and land rights are essential for the future of indigenous peoples as distinct peoples.

Freedom of speech is closely linked to self-determination. A recent paradigm shift in international law means that indigenous peoples are now recognised as peoples with peoples' rights, such as the right to self-determination. This means that indigenous peoples should be treated equally compared to those peoples that have organised as states. Indigenous peoples should also have an equal right to enjoy freedom of speech, and a good life without having to suffer from hate speech.

The Sámi are an Arctic indigenous people divided into four countries by the borders of Finland, Sweden, Norway and Russia. In Finland, there are only 10,000 Sámi. Formally the Finnish constitution grants the Sámi freedom of speech. However, hate speech is a threat to the freedom of speech of the Sámi in Finland. A 2016 survey by the Ministry of Justice concluded that Sámi encounter hate speech and harassment in public places in Finland, most often online. The most common forms are constant negative commentary, verbal insults, harassment or humiliation, name-calling, silencing or restriction of societal participation.

A small ethnic minority and indigenous people like the Sámi needs allies. The following list, based on my 2017 London School of Economics MSc Dissertation about threats to the freedom of speech of the indigenous people Sámi in Finland, is designed to help identifying hate speech against the Sámi, and to be a better ally online.

A small ethnic minority and indigenous people like the Sámi needs allies.

Silencing:

Sámi experience attempts to be silenced especially online. Silencing is explicit, politically motivated and happens in the form hate speech, harassment and even death threats by the majority population. Hate speech is the new normal: belittling, ridiculing, discrediting, defaming. This creates aggressive and hostile discussion climate towards the Sámi. Sámi women suffer disproportionally from hate speech.

Subordination:

Sámi get represented as inferior and less full and equal participants in public life than the majority population. Subordination often happens through stereotypes especially in TV comedy sketches, media and tourism. Roots of stereotypes about the Sámi are in racism. They portray Sámi as primitive, dirty, quarrelling, child-like and always drinking. Stereotypes spread by media and entertainment are not harmless fun. They show minorities their "place" in society, and they cement asymmetrical power relations.

Delegitimisation:

Sámi experience their words being discounted no matter what their merits as ideas. There are attempts to undermine the credibility of the Sámi as individuals, and on the level of the official representative body Sámi Parliament. Sámi are accused of bias due to their ethnicity. Politically active Sámi are stigmatised. Sámi are required to be unanimous, like a party. Delegitimisation denies the Sámi the right to speak for themselves and to be experts of their own culture. It also causes Sámi to be taken less seriously on the public arena, and alleviates the dominant culture from the burden of listening to a culture deemed less legitimate.

Disinformation:

Despite the highly acclaimed Finnish school system, there is little knowledge about the Sámi in the society. However, disinformation about the Sámi history is in abundance. It builds on populistic and far right rhetoric. It portrays reindeer-herding Sámi as immigrants and elites which discriminate other (also imaginary) minority Sámi groups and exclude them from politics. Disinformation about the Sámi is a strong force in the Finnish society. It builds on existing preconceptions, it is sticky and it is deliberately constructed by the dominant population in the north to undermine the Sámi politically.

Epistemicide:

Colonial societies have efficiently destroyed indigenous ways of knowing, and this has happened also in Finland that is characterised by settler colonialism. The Finnish society is built on the Finnish worldview, and the Sámi are invisible in the structures of the society from education to healthcare. However, the Sámi worldview has survived and is now more visible than ever before, especially online. Lack of knowledge and understanding about the Sámi may anger the majority population and makes it hard for them to appreciate Sámi concerns. Foundational differences between different civilisations cause communication problems that can escalate into tensions and hate speech. ●

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Address:
P.O. Box 84
00131 Helsinki, Finland
info@suomenpen.fi

www.suomenpen.fi