

Conference: Herd Immunity Against Hate and Lies

Details for panel discussion: Hate speech and lies in the media: self-regulatory mechanisms, DSA, media literacy, what would really work to curb phenomena?

Online and mass media are significant forces in our societies. They shape our attitudes, and a sense of what is and is not important. Good-quality journalism and media pluralism are key in building societal resilience to disinformation. During the workshop, we will look into self-regulation of the press as a means to tackling hate speech, misinformation and disinformation. As part of the debate, we also discuss possibilities to advance media literacy competencies. We ask if these two phenomena complement each other and in which way.

Self-regulation is often considered the most effective system for promoting ethical and deontological standards. In practice, the situation is more complicated. There is no consistency in how self-regulation of the press is applied across Europe, and its mechanisms vary from country to country. At the same time, social media is a different story since it lacks similar mechanisms.

The European Commission has initiated the Digital Services Act that seeks to consolidate various separate pieces of EU legislation and self-regulatory practices that address online illegal or 'harmful' content. However, non-governmental organizations have raised concerns if the Act will be successful at protecting freedom of expression from undue restrictions or reining in the power of Big Tech rather than cementing it. All these challenges and potential solutions will be addressed in the workshop.



Moderator

Liisa Linna is an attorney-at-law and a partner at LIVERTE Law Firm. In addition to her long career in the legal field, she has studied sociology in the University of Tallinn. She pioneered with her MA thesis on "Hate speech in Estonian media" in 2005, when the subject was still much unexplored.

She has been involved in hate speech courtcases as an expert in critical discourse analyses. Legal framework and sociological impact of the hate speech is still her passion and currently Liisa is also involved in a significant ongoing courtcase which may have unprecedented influence in Estonian law and society. Over the last year she has mentored couple of international hackathons on hate speech topic.

Liisa's human rights work extends beyond court cases and lecturing – she has a history of being a human rights activist, leading the Amnesty International Estonian group in the beginning of the millennium.



Speaker

Stanislav Matějka leads the work of the Slovak Council for Broadcasting and Retransmission related to European affairs with specific focus on media regulation, disinformation within the framework of both the European Regulators Group for Audiovisual Media Services (ERGA) and European Platform of Regulatory Authorities (EPRA). Lives in Bratislava, Slovakia.



Speaker

Helle Tiikmaa is currently president and managing director of Estonian Association of Journalists and a freelance journalist. From 1990 to 2009 she was a TV-journalist for Estonian Public Service Broadcaster ERR, fulfilling roles from cultural reporter to foreign politics analyst and presenter. Between 2008-2017 she was a doctoral student in Tartu University, focusing in her research on Public Service Broadcasting and media regulations in Estonia, not also Latvia, Lithuania and UK. She was elected to the board of Estonian Association of Journalists in 2011, vice-chair in 2012 and president in 2017.



Speaker

Heliis Raudsik is a reporter for Eesti Päevaleht, reporting mainly on false information, propaganda and internet culture. Since the pandemic she has been responsible for fact-checking combating conspiracy theories, mis- and disinformation, hate speech and lies. Toxic content online is always on her radar.