



# Hate Speech in Public discourse Cyprus

June 2019

**kisa**

Ισότητα, Στήριξη, Αντιρατσισμός  
Equality, Support, Antiracism



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## Foreword



Nationalist, populist and xenophobic movements which instrumentally mix nationalism, euroscepticism, intolerance, hate and racism in order to increase consent in public opinion represent a danger for the construction of a democratic, cohesive and peaceful European society.

The public debate is crossed by stereotypes and prejudices targeting immigrants and refugees that often degenerate in racist offenses and attacks and puts at risk social cohesion, it is therefore urgent that the European civil society strengthens its efforts to combat all forms of intolerance, stigmatization and hate speech.

This national report<sup>1</sup> has been produced by KISA and is one of the Six national reports produced in all partners' countries (Austria, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy and Spain)<sup>2</sup> in the framework of the "Words are stones" project. The main results of the six national reports are compared and summarized in an international report.

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<sup>1</sup> *The report has been produced with the financial support of the Europe for Citizens Program of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of Lunaria and cannot be*

This national report was edited and finalised in a bottom-up approach. In the first phase, the national report was drafted based on a comprehensive desk research. The report was then presented and discussed at the national workshop held end of May in Nicosia with the active participation of active citizens, of anti-racist CSOs members and of relevant stakeholders. The outcomes of the workshop were included in the revised national report. The six revised reports were presented and discussed at the international meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> of June in Salonika. The outcomes and observations of the meeting were also considered by researchers in order to revise and finalise the report.

"Words are Stones" is a transnational project coordinated by Lunaria (Italy) in partnership with [Adice \(France\)](#), [Antigone \(Greece\)](#), [Grenzenlos \(Austria\)](#), [KISA \(Cyprus\)](#) and [SOS Racismo \(Spain\)](#) aiming to:

- analyse political discourses that exacerbate xenophobia, intolerance and discrimination against migrants, refugees and minorities crossing the public debate,
- enhance civil society organizations, European citizens and institutions capacity to prevent and respond to hate speech,
- involve European youth in campaigns countering hate speech,
- sensitize European politicians to promote intercultural dialogue, human rights protection and a pacific coexistence among nationals and people coming from other countries.

*considered to reflect an official opinion of the European Commission.*

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.cronachediordinariorazzismo.org/hate-speech-national-reports/>

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## 1. The national context

### a. Hate speech in the context of the national public debate?

Cyprus was established as a bi-communal state only in 1960. According to the constitution, the Cypriot Citizens belong simultaneously either to Greek or to the Turkish community of the country. Since 1963, in the context of the intercommunal clashes, the members of the Turkish Cypriot Community withdrew from all power and structures (governmental, judicial and parliamentary). Since then, all powers are held and exercised by the Greek Cypriots in the framework of the proclamation of the “state of necessity”. Since 1974, Cyprus has been a de facto divided country. The recognised by the international community government of Cyprus is not in control of the entire territory of the country. In 1983, the northern part of the Island is proclaimed to the “Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus” (TRNC) which has not been recognised by the international Community. In theory, “TRNC” is under the control of the Turkish Cypriot Community. However, the self-proclaimed TRNC is in reality in a deep dependency of Turkey and the Turkish military forces. According to the ECtHR ruling in the *Loizidou v. Turkey* case<sup>3</sup>, Turkey is legally accountable for the areas that are not under the effective control of the recognised government of Cyprus. Consequently, this report does not cover the area not under the control of the government of Cyprus.

Hate speech as such is a contemporary issue in Cyprus which is however discussed, analysed and dealt with in a fragmented manner, segregated from the roots and reasons of its initialization. Historically, it has been deeply rooted in the public sphere within the struggle for independency from the

Ottoman and British Empire targeting mainly the Turks and the British/ “Englezi”).

Within the process of the formation of their national identity as part of the Greek nation, the Greek Cypriots also adopted the notion of Turks as the “eternal” enemy of Greeks. Later on, Turks have also been considered as the enemy that was seeking to consolidate their power and presence in Cyprus through the Turkish-Cypriot community. This view has amounted to the now fixed characterisation of Turks as the “eternal enemy”.

Later on, as Cyprus was part of the British Empire under colonisation, English people /“Englezi” also became target of hate speech, in parallel with Turks. This rhetoric was further fuelled during the EOKA armed struggle (1955- 1959) and continued even after the declaration of independence of Cyprus. In the years that followed, hate speech served as a useful tool to the nationalists of the two communities (Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots) in their efforts to dominate over the other by blaming them with a clear use of hate speech, in order to hold them accountable for the collapse of democracy and the constitution and to justify the inter-ethnic violence that took place. The manifestation of hate speech continued intensively, culminating in the 1974 Turkish military invasion when Cyprus was divided in two and the nationalist rhetoric gained more space in the public sphere.

Another point in the historical background of hate speech in Cyprus that shifted its content by adding one more target, has been the accession of the Republic of Cyprus to the European Union in 2004.

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<sup>3</sup> Judgement Summary, 28 July 1998, see points 19-26, available at [\[50\\)%22%22,%22documentcollectionid%22:%7B%22GRANDC HAMBER%22,%22CHAMBER%22,%22itemid%22:%7B%22001-58201%22%7D%7D\]\(https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#%7B%22fulltext%22:%7B%22%22C ASE%20OF%20LOIZIDOU%20v.%20TURKEY%20\(ARTICLE%2050\)%22%22,%22documentcollectionid%22:%7B%22GRANDC HAMBER%22,%22CHAMBER%22,%22itemid%22:%7B%22001-58201%22%7D%7D\)](https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#%7B%22fulltext%22:%7B%22%22C ASE%20OF%20LOIZIDOU%20v.%20TURKEY%20(ARTICLE%20</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

As a result of this, Cyprus had to harmonise its national legislation, politics and practices with the European acquis on Asylum / international protection. A legal framework for asylum was set up for the first time outside the utilitarian approach of foreigners as “guest workers”, recognizing and safeguarding specific rights and thus transforming the immigration model of Cyprus. Since then, Cyprus has been a hosting country of many asylum seekers, whose numbers are rising especially during the last 4 years of the so-called refugee crisis. Cyprus’ EU accession has marked a turning point also regarding hate speech. Foreigners have been targeted, not replacing the rhetoric of the Turkish enemy, but in connection to it. The topic of immigration and asylum has contributed to the phenomenon of xenophobia that had been developed since the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus. The idea of an invasion by migrants and social beliefs about the “big replacement”, always articulated with the Turkish invasion and settlement, emerged in the Cypriot political landscape. The stigmatization and criminalization of foreigners in Cyprus have reached a perlocutionary effect and fuel the racist representations of society as a whole. With this performative power, hate speech is an extremely powerful political tool to persuade voters and rally public opinion to political agendas.

In the years that followed Cyprus’ EU accession, specifically in 2008, it was the first time that the President who was elected was coming from a party that could be described as left-wing. This was a major blow to the long and traditionally established right, according to whom ‘the communists’ had taken over power. The use of hate speech in this context was frequently used for political reasons. However, it was not anymore targeting the enemy from outside (Turkey), but the enemy inside, the government as pro-immigratory

and consequently, pro-turkish. Up to then, migrants were targeted as being Turkey’s instrument to take over the whole island, while now it was the government that was accused for the same reasons.

Against this backdrop, and, for the first time again, there was a systematic attempt by the opposition to link the government with a pro-immigration policy at all costs and to the detriment of its own citizens.

This situation was further facilitated and fuelled by the establishment of the ELAM<sup>4</sup> party, a far-right military style political movement which has been openly connected with the Greek far-right Golden Dawn and described as its “brother movement”. ELAM’s use of hate speech against the leftist government aimed at two directions: on one hand, to present the government as pro-turkish, favourably inclined towards Turkey’s interests and on the other hand, to present it as pro-immigratory, in the sense that it favours migrants to the detriment of its own citizens. As a result of the latter, the economic crisis and unemployment were caused by these policies of the government.

#### **b. Definition of hate speech**

National legislation does not define hate speech as such. There is no definition of hate speech in international law either.

Recommendation 97(20) of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe<sup>5</sup> defined “hate speech” 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.” In this sense, “hate speech” covers

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<sup>4</sup> ELAM – Εθνικό Λαϊκό Μέτωπο - National Popular Front

<sup>5</sup> See ‘Scope’, p. 2, available at <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=0900001680505d5b>

comments which are necessarily directed against a person or a particular group of persons.

The ECtHR refers to “all forms of expression which spread, incite, promote or justify hatred based on intolerance (including religious intolerance)”. In its work, KISA defines hate speech as any speech or other forms of expression that attacks a person or a group on the basis of imputed or real attributes such as race, religion, ethnic origin, national origin, gender, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity and nationality and legal status.

### c. National legal framework

National legislation criminalises certain forms of expression, without however defining them as hate speech as such.

- i) The Law on the Combating of Certain Forms and Expression of Racism and Xenophobia by means of Criminal Law, of 2011 (Law 134(I)/2011<sup>6</sup>) which was introduced to transpose Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA and a 2015 Criminal Code amendment, criminalizes any person who deliberately and publicly disseminates and incites to violence or hatred in any manner against a group of persons or a member of such a group defined by reference to race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin -a note of concern here is the fact that the Law does not refer to sexual orientation and gender identity . The notion of public dissemination has been interpreted to include not only oral communication but also the distribution of tracts, written material or pictures or the representation of ideas or theories or with any other means including computer systems which include electronic data. There is no specific reference to the denial of the holocaust, but certain forms or speech are specifically criminalized in the Law, such as:
  - a) intentionally publicly condoning, denying or grossly trivializing crimes of genocide, crimes

against humanity and war crimes as defined in Articles 6, 7 and 8 of the Statute of the International Criminal Court, directed against a group of persons or a member of such a group defined by reference to race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin when the conduct is carried out in a manner likely to incite to violence or hatred against such a group or a member of such a group;

- b) intentionally publicly condoning, denying or grossly trivializing the crimes defined in Article 6 of the Charter of the International Military Tribunal appended to the London Agreement of 8 August 1945, directed against a group of persons or a member of such a group defined by reference to race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin when the conduct is carried out in a manner likely to incite to violence or hatred against such a group or a member of such a group only when the above mentioned crimes have been established by a final decision of an international court.

- ii) The Criminal Code contains two provisions in relation to hate discrimination; Section 47 (1)(b)<sup>7</sup> penalises the commission of acts in public with intent to promote enmity between the communities or religious groups on account of race, religion, colour or gender. Furthermore, its amendment in May 2015 by Law 87(I)2015 integrated Section 99(A)<sup>8</sup> which punishes public incitement to violence or hatred – but not discrimination - against a group of persons or a member of such a group on the basis of their sexual orientation or their gender identity. The conduct carries imprisonment of up to 3 years or a fine of up to 5000 euros or both.
- iii) The ratification law of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and its additional protocols, Law 12/1967<sup>9</sup> and its amendment<sup>10</sup>, criminalize oral or written or in any other manner, public incitement to acts likely to cause discrimination, hatred or violence against

<sup>6</sup> Available in Greek, at [http://www.cylaw.org/nomoi/enop/non-ind/2011\\_1\\_134/full.html](http://www.cylaw.org/nomoi/enop/non-ind/2011_1_134/full.html)

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.cylaw.org/nomoi/enop/ind/0\\_154/section-sc62405e78-42a0-481c-a3bd-372eeda41a7b.html](http://www.cylaw.org/nomoi/enop/ind/0_154/section-sc62405e78-42a0-481c-a3bd-372eeda41a7b.html)

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.cylaw.org/nomoi/enop/ind/0\\_154/section-sc6b5f2a28-2aba-4385-6ce7-07d5b97c9d6f.html](http://www.cylaw.org/nomoi/enop/ind/0_154/section-sc6b5f2a28-2aba-4385-6ce7-07d5b97c9d6f.html)

<sup>9</sup> [http://cylaw.org/nomoi/arith/1967\\_1\\_012.pdf](http://cylaw.org/nomoi/arith/1967_1_012.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.cylaw.org/nomoi/arith/1992\\_3\\_011.pdf](http://www.cylaw.org/nomoi/arith/1992_3_011.pdf)

persons or groups on account of their racial or ethnic origin or religion, also covering offensive ideas expressed on the same grounds. The conduct carries imprisonment of up to two years or a fine of up to 1000 pounds (around 1500 euros) or both.

**d. Authorities in charge of collecting official data on hate speech (Law Enforcement Agencies, LAE)**

There is not any single authority collecting data on hate speech. Whilst the Police collects some data on hate and racist crime these are hardly accurate whereas no separate data are collected on hate speech as such. As a result, there is a serious lack of data on hate speech in order to update policies but also to identify crimes of hate speech when those are committed. Potential authorities or bodies that may collect data sparingly and independently from one another are the following:

**- Police Office for Combatting Discrimination (OCD)**

The Office for Combatting Discrimination is under the Criminal Investigation Office (CIO) of the Cyprus Police. The OCD has been operating since 2005 and has the responsibility to monitor the investigation of complaints and reports submitted to the police on incidents of discrimination. Complaint forms are general and do identify hate speech as a separate issue.

**- Office of the Commissioner for Administration and National Human Rights Office**

The Office of the Commissioner for Administration and Human Rights is considered to be an extra judicial mechanism offering protection for human rights violations, including discrimination on all grounds. However, the latest problematic<sup>11</sup> appointment of the person of the Commissioner lead the institution to inactivity and downgrading<sup>12</sup> of its function as an antidiscrimination and antiracist body, as a result of which no data is probably collected.

**- Cyprus Media Complaints Commission (CMCC)**

Responsible for both written and electronic news media, it is entirely free from government interference or judicial supervision and examines complaints or ab initio violations of the code of conduct of journalists including hate speech and offensive narrative. Out of the 33 complaints against mainstream and online media examined in 2018 by the CMCC, only one was related to hate speech.

**- Cyprus Radio-Television Authority (CRTA)**

Examines complaints or initiate investigations into the violation of the legal framework regulating electronic media -with the exception of social media and the internet- which also includes some provisions against racism and discrimination.

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<sup>11</sup> "A Delegation Of 9 NGOs Met The President Of The Parliamentary Committee On Institutions, Merit And The Commissioner For Administration", March 30, 2017, available at <https://cyc.org.cy/en/a-delegation-of-9-ngos-met-the-president-of-the-parliamentary-committee-on-institutions-merit-and-the-commissioner-for-administration/>

<sup>12</sup> KISA Press Release, "ECRI is concern over the inaction of the Office of the Commissioner for Administration at supporting vulnerable groups", Jun 7, 2019, available at <https://kisa.org.cy/ecri-is-concern-that-the-office-of-the-commissioner-for-administration-has-not-carried-out-any-activities-aimed-at-supporting-vulnerable-groups/>

## 2. “Political” hate speech in Cyprus / hate speech by public figures

### a. Definition of political hate speech

“Political” hate speech, as expressed and witnessed within Cyprus, can only be defined as the incitement to hostility and hate against members of group with specific characteristics, especially in relation to their race, colour, status in the country, religious and ethnic origin, by people in influential power positions. Influential people are people who sit in power positions in the government, the Parties, the national authorities, the Law Enforcement Agencies, the Mass Media, the Academia, the religious educational and cultural institutions under the guise of the nationalistic narrative of a “duty to be a patriot”.

### b. Main tendencies of political hate speech: Actors. Targets. Bias Motivations

With the deadlock in the negotiations for a solution to the Cyprus question continuing since 2017, the nationalist, populist and neo-nazi forces trotted out the rhetoric of the “eternal enemy”, namely the Turks and therefore, the Turkish Cypriot community. Ultra-nationalism, based on the triptych slogan of “fatherland, religion, family” heralded as the apogee of Hellenism by the dictatorship of Metaxas in WW II and the Greek junta of 1967-1974, is zealously championed by ELAM. In the recent European Parliamentary elections, ELAM more than doubled its vote to 8.25% from 3.71% in 2016, when it entered the House of Representatives (parliament) for the first time with 2 MPs. The presence of ELAM in parliament legitimised and mainstreamed the party in the political life of Cyprus, thereby providing the platform for normalising ultra-nationalism and its constituent elements of racism, hate speech and hate crime, violence and exclusion of all “other” communities and minorities, including Turkish Cypriots and, by extension, all Muslims.

What is of more significance, however, is the effect this has had on a considerable part of the society. As elsewhere, instead of seeing through the underpinning ideology of forces such as ELAM, which is ultimately against the very essence of democracy and lead society backwards and to regression, they have capitulated to its temporary lures and hastened to adopt nationalism and its accompanying racism, xenophobia and exclusion of the “other”.

In their attempt to divert popular attention away from the inability / unwillingness of the establishment to provide viable and effective solutions to a very challenging political and socio-economic environment in Cyprus, or to attract lost and/or new voters and for other political expediencies, many politicians and other public figures, such as the Archbishop, invariably use hate speech -this use will be further presented and analysed in the third section of the report through exemplary cases. By making use of over-simplifications and fake news, appealing to people’s basic instincts, popular resentment, mistrust and discontent, fears and feelings of a widespread sense of insecurity and national identity, apprehensions as to theirs and their children’s future, politicians and public figures resort to hate speech that incites hate crime, violations of human rights, deep social divisions and inequalities, the marginalisation and exclusion of the weak and the vulnerable.

Hate speech is a powerful tool in the hands of conservative powers manipulated to shift public discourse from rationality to irrationality. Also used to demonise, dehumanise and belittle individuals or social groups, hate speech can become a mechanism for the isolation of political competitors, activists or the ‘other’ and for the interception of social movements and progressive changes.

Depending on the circumstances, hate speech targets social groups subjected or vulnerable to discrimination, racism and xenophobia and which become the scapegoats for all ills. These include migrants, who are 'liars', 'criminals', 'illegal', 'blackies' and 'get our jobs', 'grab the bread out of the mouths of Cypriots', refugees and asylum seekers, who are all 'lazy, they 'do nothing and get thousands of euro in welfare benefit' Turks and Turkish Cypriots, all Muslims<sup>13</sup>, who are 'barbarians', they 'want to Islamise Cyprus' and 'many of them belong to terrorist kernels that are directly related to Turkey's secret services', and people from Africa – whatever their migration, refugee or other status, who are 'savages' and 'lazy'. Altogether, migrants and refugees are here to change the 'demographic structure' of the country, in the framework of a Turkish plan, eventually, to eliminate Greek Cypriots, to 'undermine our culture and religion'. LGBTQI people, primarily targeted by the Archbishop but also by others, are invariably called 'sick', 'abnormal' and 'zoophiles' that undermine the very basis of 'our religion, values and morals'.

However, hate speech does not only target minorities and vulnerable groups in the above sense, but also anyone who defends their rights and stands up for their safeguarding; pro-resolutionist anti-nationalist activists/groups and civil society organisations, especially human rights and migrant rights activists, that are critical of the authorities, are targeted as 'traitors' or 'enemy collaborators'. Over the years, KISA and its leadership have been repeatedly harassed, persecuted and prosecuted for no other reason

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<sup>13</sup> As in the case of the Turkish Cypriot community, which is one of the two constituent communities of Cyprus, Islam is one of the two official religions of Cyprus, expressly protected by the Constitution of Cyprus.

<sup>14</sup> *Criminality Statistic Data - Racial Incidents - Incidents and/or Cases of Racial Nature and/or with Racial Motive 2005-2018, Incidents and/or Cases of Racial Nature and/or with Racial Motive 2005-2018*, last updated April 2019,

than long-standing critical stance and exposure of individual and/or group violations of human rights and institutional discrimination and racism against migrants and refugees.

### c. Official data

The Office of the Police for Combating Discrimination (OCD), operating since 2005 under the Crime Combating Department, is the only official body that collects and publishes<sup>14</sup> data on racist incidents. This data contains information on the number of incidents, the motive, the nationality of the complainants and the accused, as well as the course of the court procedure, if any.

Although the cases recorded by the OCD in 2018 nearly doubled compared to 2016 (30 compared to 17), this number grossly underrepresents the extent of racism and hate against migrants and refugees as observed by KISA and other NGOs, including at EU level<sup>15</sup>, according to which migrants, especially undocumented migrants, and refugees seldom report these incidents to the police, due to mistrust of the police, lack of confidence in the impact of reporting, fear of victimisation and lack of awareness of rights.

In the 30 incidents recorded in 2018, there were 35 complainants/victims and 42 accused/perpetrators; 26 of the victims were Cypriots (G/C: 8, T/C: 6) and other EU citizens (12) and only 9 (25.7%) were from third countries. In the case of the perpetrators, the overwhelming majority were Greek Cypriots (25 – nearly 60%), while the nationality of 14 of them is unspecified.

available at

<http://www.police.gov.cy/police/police.nsf/All/1C252B726BFD221EC22583D900385889?OpenDocument>

<sup>15</sup> ENAR Shadow Report 2015 – 2016: Racism and Discrimination in the context of Migration in Europe, at [https://www.enar-eu.org/IMG/pdf/shadowreport\\_2015x2016\\_long\\_low\\_res.pdf](https://www.enar-eu.org/IMG/pdf/shadowreport_2015x2016_long_low_res.pdf)

In terms of the nature of the crime, 19 cases were merely recorded, 11 were under criminal investigation, 8 were being reviewed, 3 were filed in court and 1 in abeyance.

Some indicative tables of the published data on racist incidents and/or cases of racial nature and/or with racial motive as published by the Police for the years 2005-2018 are appended in the end of the report for further consideration.

#### **d. Relevant results of secondary sources – NGOs, research and academia, International monitoring bodies**

##### **- International monitoring bodies**

- i) In its Concluding Observations on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> periodic report of Cyprus, published in May 2017<sup>16</sup>, the **UN** Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) expressed its concern over the phenomena of hate speech and hate crime in Cyprus and recommended a number of actions to the Cypriot authorities. The recommendations included adoption of a comprehensive legislation on hate speech, in accordance with the requirements of article 4 of the Convention, and enforcement of legislative provisions to prosecute perpetrators of hate crimes and hate speech to deter further crimes and prevent impunity of perpetrators.
- ii) Council of Europe's European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) has so far published five reports on Cyprus<sup>17</sup>, in its monitoring capacity, the latest being in 2016.

The Commission noted that up to 2016, only two cases were tried, in 2009 and 2010, specifically under Law 12/1967, one of which ended in a

conviction, adding that Law 134(I)/2011 has not been invoked in any case until then.

##### **- NGOs, Research and Academia**

It is noted again that there is a disturbing inconsistency and mismatch in the official data elaborated above and the actual extent, significance and impact of the problem. Along with the monitoring reports carried out by international bodies, civil society actors and KISA amongst them, struggle to fill in this very inconsistency. KISA from its part, is putting its efforts towards this end through the implementation of the projects and the use of the tools presented below. However, these efforts are still far from sufficient to consist an overall and effective tool of recording discriminatory incidents and protecting victims or persons affected by them, for reasons that will be further elaborated in the last section of the present report.

- i) The *Confronting Hate Speech, Behaviour and Crimes in Cyprus* project, co-funded by EEA Grants and the Republic of Cyprus, was implemented by Promitheas Research Institute in the period April 2014 – September 2016. The main project actions included a research study and report<sup>18</sup>, focus groups discussions, including bicomunal ones, with experts, stakeholders and young people, video spots for awareness raising and addressed to the project target groups, namely Greek and Turkish Cypriots, migrants and LGBTs, as well as an educational tool addressed to 12-14 year olds, aimed to promote tolerance, acceptance of diversity, and mutual respect of the two communities (Greek and Turkish Cypriot).

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<sup>16</sup> Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, *Concluding observation on the twenty-third and twenty-fourth periodic reports of Cyprus*, 12 May 2017, at [https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CERD/Shared%20Documents/CYP/INT\\_CERD\\_COC\\_CYP\\_27472\\_E.pdf](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CERD/Shared%20Documents/CYP/INT_CERD_COC_CYP_27472_E.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> ECRI, *Country Monitoring in Cyprus*, all relevant material available at <https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-commission-against-racism-and-intolerance/cyprus>

<sup>18</sup> "Report on Hate speech and Crimes in Cyprus", 2015, available in Greek and Turkish at <http://www.inep.org.cy/ekthesi-gia-ti-ritoriki-misoys>

The major finding of the research is that hate speech between Greek and Turkish Cypriots, although subsiding in recent years, can be easily triggered by political and social actors by references to history and/or isolated violent incidents. According to the study, hate speech is rooted in historical legacies, conservative and nationalistic world-views, it takes several forms and permeates Cypriot society, although most times it is not explicitly expressed and does not take a violent turn.

ii) The project *C.O.N.T.A.C.T.* (Creating an Online Network, monitoring Team and phone App to Counter hate crime Tactics), was a European Union supported project conducted from 2015 until 2017, with a focus on hate speech and hate crime of a racist, xenophobic, homophobic or transphobic nature or motive—. Carried out in Cyprus by the NGO Aequitas and coordinated by the University of Cyprus, the project was implemented by partners from 9 EU member states and its outcomes include a research into online hate speech and its perception, a hate crime recording website<sup>19</sup> and phone app<sup>20</sup>, training and awareness raising campaigns among relevant actors, such as the police and officials, media professionals and youth, the creation of a joint university teaching module, conferences and other events. The final result of the project was the publication of a book in 2017, titled *“Online Hate Speech in the European Union A Discourse-Analytic Perspective”*<sup>21</sup>. ).

As to the overall data recorded during the project, the hate crime recording website and phone app had 203 submissions. Out of these, 35.6% were online hate speech, 22.8% were verbal abuse, 18.5% were discrimination incidents, and 9.2% were physical violence. the largest by far share of motivation was attributed

to race, ethnicity and nationality (over 180), about 95 of them to gender identity, including transgender, and sexual orientation, about 100 to religious belief, 10 to disability, while over 30 incidents were not specified.

iii) KISA is a partner to the eMORE Project which aims to address the need to support the development/improvement of efficient monitoring and reporting mechanisms for online hate speech and hate crime and, in particular, the need to foster the integration between monitoring and reporting tools into a joint innovative knowledge model. In this context, it has deployed an online survey<sup>22</sup> with the following findings:

In relation to the Republic of Cyprus country-profile (October 2016), of the twenty online respondents, 58.8% were between 30-49 years old, 17.6% were between 26-29 years old, 17.6% were between 18-25, and 5.9% were between 50-69 years old. The diversity of age groups reflects the transgenerational character of racist experiences. Nine of the respondents lived in RoC, one in Israel, one in Spain, one in Belgium, one in Pakistan, one in Bangladesh, one in Greece, one in United Kingdom and one in Turkey. Three of them chose not to respond to the question of where they resided. As a transgenerational and transnational phenomenon, hate speech can be captured, recorded and denounced regardless of the geographical area where it is expressed through this kind of application via the Internet.

Some of the respondents did not inform on their place of residence; most of them (58.8%) live in a country other than their country of birth).

Only 51% submitted their nationality, being Polish/Brazilian, Brazilian, Romanian, Greek,

<sup>19</sup> <http://reportinghate.eu/en/report-hate/>

<sup>20</sup> <http://reportinghate.eu/cyy/phone-app/>

<sup>21</sup> Available at <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-319-72604-5>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.emoreproject.eu/infographics/>

Macedonian, Polish, Syrian, Italian, Cypriot, Greek/Cypriot, Pakistani.

Among all the data, the two that people have decided not to inform are place of residence and nationality. It can be hypothesized that this choice reflects fears about their testimony. Once again, the legal status of individuals and the minority situation in which they find themselves prevent them from expressing their experience with confidence.

The main obstacle encountered with this type of instrument for recording incidents is that it seeks to fulfil an objective of information recording and not of legal approach. Thus, hate speech victims do not have much interest in using this kind of tool. It should be concretely linked to legal services so that the testimony can be treated under the anti-discrimination law.

iv) KISA is an implementing partner of the *TOGETHER! Fighting against hate crimes - Empowering civil society and law enforcement agencies to make hate crime visible* transnational program which was carried out from the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 2014 until the 31<sup>st</sup> of November 2016.

As a result, KISA submitted a National Report on Hate Crime Monitoring<sup>23</sup> where it recorded the national legal framework and competent authorities on hate crimes, the reported cases, the campaigns and trainings it carried out, as well as its recommendations for additional measures and improvements both in protecting victims of hate crimes and in monitoring them.

v) RADIAAlert has been part of the Action Against Discrimination project of KISA and was conceived in order to unravel the magnitude of the problem of racism and discrimination in Cyprus, as well as to foster wider coalitions of civil society and other actors in the field of antiracism in order to effectively combat these phenomena. In addition, RADIAAlert will raise awareness and sensitise both society and state in order to develop effective defences and actions to counter the increasing racist, xenophobic, islamophobic and sexist discourse in Cyprus.

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<sup>23</sup> Available at <https://kisa.org.cy/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/together-cy-en.pdf>

### 3. Exemplary Cases of hate speech

The following cases constitute a useful indicator of the most prevalent aspects of hate speech in Cyprus. The cases that were recorded from the end of 2017 up to date are listed below based on the actor using hate speech or its target and are thus examples of political/institutional hate speech as defined earlier above:

#### a. Hate speech and church

Cyprus can be described as a deeply religious country, in the sense that the church and its leaders seek and actually succeed great interference in the public sphere. They represent the most conservative ideology and views, while the majority of their public statements consist hate speech. It is our view that in this section in particular, we need to include even older references of hate speech from church representatives, dating from 2016, in order to fully present the matter and its gravity.

- i) Asked about how the Church perceives homosexuals, the Archbishop, who was a guest at a TV show (Veto, Mega Channel) at the end of 2016, said that they were establishing schools *“that will give children principles”*. *“We will demand that proper people will come out them (schools), complete personalities, to help the country and to lead exemplary lives,”* he said. Commenting on how he would talk about homosexuality to pupils that might themselves belong to that social group, he said that he would tell them that homosexuality is a sin and unnatural and that one ought to struggle to overcome it. He added that by next September, the Church would establish ten kindergartens and two years later it would also establish two primary schools, followed by two secondary education schools six years after that. Accept-Cyprus, an NGO defending LGBTQI’s rights, proceeded with reporting the Archbishop’s hate speech to the Attorney

General, who once again, chose to cover up the matter.

- ii) In May 2017, the Archbishop was again interviewed during a TV show at the state broadcaster RIK, where he referred to the Turkish ‘settlers’ who live in northern Cyprus as follows: *‘there are around 300,000 persons, they are Anatolians (“orientals”), uncouth and uncivilized, they will not become Europeans not even 100 years later [...] they spawn a dozen children per family [...] they only had one aim (coming here), they wanted to shift the demographic structure of our people’*. KISA made a complaint to the Attorney General in relation to the above, on the basis that they constitute hate speech against a group of persons who are defined on their Turkish ethnic origin and religion, and which effectively targets all the Muslim population of Turkish origin in the areas not controlled by the Government of the Republic, including the Turkish Cypriots. In his reply, the Attorney General not only adopted the Archbishop’s positions, but he also targeted KISA with the insinuations that it is allegedly commending and trivialising war crimes.
- iii) At the end of 2017 and on the occasion of Christmas Day, the Archbishop of Cyprus once again<sup>24</sup> spread the venom of intolerance and tried to undermine the bicomunal discussions for a peaceful resolution to the Cyprus problem through his Christmas circular<sup>25</sup>. He therein described refugees as the ultimate *“threat to the nation”* because they are Muslims and urged people *“to fight against”* this threat. He added that *“Muslims are sent to Cyprus by Turkey as so-called refugees with the intention to alter our national and cultural identity”* with the danger

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<sup>24</sup> In the past, the Archbishop has repeatedly targeted refugees, migrants, asylum seekers, Turkish-Cypriots, homosexuals and the LGBTQI community.

<sup>25</sup> <http://churchofcyprus.org.cy/38930>

that “*what is described in the book of Exodus will happen*”, that is, that “*in case of war, they will become one with the enemy*”. KISA again condemned<sup>26</sup> this bout of hate speech by the Archbishop together with filing a relevant complaint, however, no further measures were taken by the competent authorities and no political party took a stand on this.

- iv) A very recent incident of hate speech in June 2019, comes from the public statements<sup>27</sup> of the Bishop of Morfou, who is known for his discriminatory views and discourse. During his speech at a group of people, he contemplated that homosexuality passes on to the unborn when pregnant women enjoy anal sex. In the aftermath of his statements which went viral on the internet and spurred many comments, he insisted that he was ‘only expressing the positions of the Church and the positions of the saints’...

### **b. Hate speech and political parties**

Public statements containing hate speech are a common phenomenon within the political actors’ discourse. Without ever vanishing at all, it peaks in times of economic crises as the one Cyprus is supposedly facing during the last years and in the pre-election periods when political parties and figures use this discriminatory agenda in their opportunistic pursuit of power.

- i) In October 2018 and on the occasion of OCHI day which is celebrated as a national day in Greece and Cyprus commemorating the counterattack

against the invading Italian forces and the Greek resistance, a public-school teacher made a speech in a church in Nicosia<sup>28</sup>. People came out on social media saying her speech was a fascistic outburst praising extreme nationalism, claiming Greek racial superiority, racial hatred and homophobia.

The extreme far-right political party ELAM publicly defended the teacher. Politicians from DISY, the ruling conservative party proclaimed this was freedom of speech.

- ii) A Greek Cypriot political party leader was forced to distance himself this week from one of his own European election candidates after she claimed that “*Cyprus is Greek*”<sup>29</sup>.

The outcry over her remarks came less than a week after a Turkish Cypriot academic was widely criticised for his decision to stand as a candidate for the Greek Cypriot communist party AKEL. Professor Niyazi Kızılyürek, head of the Turkish studies and Middle Eastern studies department at the University of Cyprus, was officially unveiled as one of the main opposition party’s six candidates last Saturday, despite not being an AKEL member.

### **c. Hate speech and civil servants**

In March 2019 an amateur video was published<sup>30</sup>, recording part of the abuse faced by a refugee woman from Somalia in a local office of the Social Welfare Services. The SW officer in the reception denied to respond to the woman’s requests as to her case and later called the security guard who approached her and grabbed her by the throat in order to remove her<sup>31</sup>. The security guard then

<sup>26</sup> KISA Press Release, January 6, 2018, available at <https://kisa.org.cy/kisa-condemns-the-latest-bout-of-hate-speech-by-the-archbishop-of-cyprus/>

<sup>27</sup> <https://cyprus-mail.com/2019/07/26/bishop-says-homosexuality-passed-on-to-the-unborn-when-pregnant-women-enjoy-anal-sex/>

<sup>28</sup> <https://cyprus-mail.com/2018/11/02/no-need-to-look-far-to-find-real-enemy-within-the-walls/>

<sup>29</sup> <http://www.t-vine.com/furore-over-euro-parliament-candidates-cyprus-is-greek-comment/>

<sup>30</sup> <https://youtu.be/2z5fnw1kles>

<sup>31</sup> KISA Press Release, March 12, 2019, available at <https://kisa.org.cy/institutional-racism-hate-crimes-and->

attacked her again by hitting her, and violently threw her out of the building. The woman decided to file a report to the police. When she went to the police station, the female police officer told her that the incident was her own fault, that the attack of the guard was reasonable as he has the right to defend himself and, in the end, did not allow her to file her complaint. Following the incident, KISA held a meeting with women of the Somali community, during which they reported that they systematically face institutional racism, gender violence and humiliating treatment because of their colour, their religion and the legal status of their residence, in pretty much all aspects of their lives.

#### **d. Hate speech and mainstream media**

Television channel programs, newspapers and radio stations in Cyprus use and reproduce hate speech also through a usual dramatization of facts and distortion of events. This is reflected in the influence they exert by shaping the views of citizens and normalising discriminatory behaviours. The selective or light response of the competent authority that was mentioned earlier above, further aggravates this problematic situation.

- i) A complaint submitted to the Cyprus Media Complaint Commission (CMCC), referred to the content of “Face to Face”, a radio programme of CyBC (semi-public radio and television station), which on 19/11/2017 hosted Christos Christou, head of the neo-nazi party ELAM, in the framework of the 2018 presidential election campaign. The content of the complaint included the following: That Paris Potamitis, the journalist who presented the programme, and CyBC’s Board of Directors hosted Ch. Christou in full knowledge of his ideology and that of his party and their relation

to Golden Dawn of Greece. In this view, the said journalist and CyBC’s Board were actively involved in inciting to racial hatred and justification of racial violence and crimes. The way CyBC and the journalist chose to project Ch. Christou on the pretext that he was a presidential candidate, promoted, willingly or not, the racist neo-nazi ideology which constitutes an insult to the country’s democratic institutions”, that the “media are not allowed to promote and incite racial hatred, racism and xenophobia”. The complainant called on the CMCC to “intervene in order to contain this racist storm”.

The Commission decided that Ch. Christou’s references during the programme undeniably constitute hate and xenophobic and addressing human instincts and fear. Noting that its mandate is to implement the Journalists’ Code of Practice and not any national or international legislation, the Commission decided that in view of the intervening period since the complaint, it would be more productive to issue not a decision as such but a reminder to all concerned about the obligations of journalists in similar circumstances. Thus, the Commission notes that article 11 of the Journalists’ Code of Practice prohibits “any act that includes elements of prejudice on the grounds of race, colour, language, religion, political or other beliefs, ethnicity or social origin, property, background, age, gender and personal status, including physical or mental illness or disability”. It also notes that the Code clearly and expressly defines that, in cases where persons hosted on media programmes/shows express positions and make statements that entail hatred, prejudices against migrants, journalists-presenters are obliged to intervene “directly and effectively” in order to dissociate their position and that of their media, while

they should condemn these statements if they are made by public officials or public figures or persons who exercise influence on public opinion.

- ii) A case of blatant use of hate speech that however, remained unpunished, was that of a popular Greek singer, Sfakianakis, who has in the past expressed his support for the far-right Greek party Golden Dawn. During his interview at a weekly TV show, he said about Syrian refugees in Greece that ‘they are not refugees, they are deserters and cowards [...] hordes of people arrived which rape our country, [...] they Islamise Greece, and because they reproduce like rabbits, there will be no Greece, no Greeks’. The Cyprus Radio television Authority imposed an administrative fine of 21.000 euros to the state broadcaster CyBC for airing content “inciting hatred based on race, sex, religion or nationality”. KISA called on the Police and the Attorney General to investigate and charge the singer under the relevant Criminal Code provisions. Surprisingly not, the Attorney General decided not to proceed with charges for ‘reasons of public interest’<sup>32</sup>, an excuse which is steadily invoked by the Attorney in cases of hate speech. The incident took place between in 2016, however, it is a grave one and could not be omitted in the present report.
- iii) In February 2019, a case of alleged ‘infant abuse’ made headline news in media frenzy with rape allegations against the infant’s father<sup>33</sup>, following the doctor’s report that the five-month baby had a broken hymen. The infant was transferred to the hospital following her parents’ concern regarding her health. Later on, the Assistant Director of Paediatric

Surgery made public statements to the media prior to the completion of the investigation of the case, where he expressed that he was appalled and stated that he was confident that the child had been a victim of rape. He added that due to the nationality of her parents the possibility of female genital mutilation (FGM) was examined, revealing the country of origin of the child and her parents. Within less than 24 hours, statements to the media were made by the Executive Director of the hospital, who ruled out the possibility of rape. However, he suggested the possibility of abuse caused by the parents “in order to come within the protection of the state and to benefit from it”, ignoring the fact that the family was already under state protection since they were recognised refugees. It later turned out that the infant had some swelling in the genital area. The father was arrested as a suspect for rape of his baby. KISA called for an investigation of serious disciplinary and criminal offences by medical staff at the Hospital, as well as for any investigation concerning the practices of all those involved, in the light of discrimination on the basis of ethnicity within the healthcare system and the provision of services<sup>34</sup>. It also called upon the media to be particularly careful in the way they broadcast news concerning ethnic groups, especially children, so as not to reproduce racist stereotypes. Following the conclusion of the two-months internal investigation that was ordered by the Ministry of Health, the doctor who wrongly claimed that the infant was raped was said that would probably face disciplinary charges.

#### **e. Hate speech and social media**

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<sup>32</sup> Photo of the respond available at <https://www.facebook.com/KISACYPRUS/photos/a.452106748147772/1356181307740307/?type=3&theater>

<sup>33</sup> <https://knews.kathimerini.com.cy/en/news/baby-s-broken-hymen-leads-to-father-s-arrest>

<sup>34</sup> KISA Press Release, February 25, 2019, available at <https://kisa.org.cy/kisas-statement-concerning-the-case-of-infant-abuse-currently-under-investigation/>

While most social networks have aligned with the international guidelines and legal framework on combatting hate speech, in practice, this is not always feasible without the recourse to national laws. For example, in its community standards, Facebook elaborates that *"Facebook removes hate speech, which includes content that directly attacks people based on their: race, ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, sex, gender or gender identity, or serious disabilities or diseases"*.

The national law on offences involving the dissemination of racist and xenophobic material through computer systems (L. 26(III)/2004) provides for imprisonment of up to five years, a fine of up to €20,000 or both.

i) In December 2018 and for the first time in Cyprus, a woman was prosecuted for racist and xenophobic comments she made on Facebook targeting a couple that adopted a child of Asian origin<sup>35</sup>. The case was brought to court following a complaint submitted by a citizen to the Commissioner for Children's Rights, back in 2016. The woman pleaded guilty to the charge of disseminating and making racist and xenophobic material available online which promotes racial discrimination hatred or violence, and was fined 800 euros.

ii) In July 2018, the Union of Cyprus Journalists condemned death threats made online against a journalist following his comments in his personal Facebook account regarding the effects of the 1974 Turkish invasion<sup>36</sup>. His post was shared by someone on the wall of 'Dimokratiki Paremvasi' (Democratic Intervention) Facebook group,

whose content and members belong to the fascist far-right. Underneath, someone wrote: *"I accidentally tuned into the radio station his show is on every afternoon and all I thought was that someone should put a bullet through his head to be over with. A Turk in every sense of the word"*. The incident was reported to the police by the journalist himself but no further progress has been made as to the investigation.

iii) It is worth noting that, in particular during the last year, there has been an increase in hate speech expressed through private profiles or groups in Facebook (such as "Democratic Intervention"<sup>37</sup> as mentioned above and "Cyprus Politics"<sup>38</sup>) that serve as the field of action for nationalists and racists to target vulnerable groups and people who defend them, also contributing to the dissemination of fake news as will be presented below.

#### **f. Hate speech and fake news**

i) In April 2018, the far-right party ELAM and part of the media succeeded in turning an incident of juvenile delinquency into a racial and religious discriminatory discourse. On April 4<sup>th</sup>, a group of young people that was gathered outside the church of Faneromeni (a daily hangout spot for groups of alternative and socially marginalised young people in the centre of the old city of Nicosia), ended up quarrelling intensely with each other, causing a nuisance. This incident was presented on Sigmalive news page first and then republished by other electronic media outlets, both in Cyprus and Greece, as an attack by Muslim fundamentalists against Orthodox

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<sup>35</sup> Cyprus Mail, "Facebook user fined for insulting couple who adopted Asian girl", January 9, 2019, available at <https://cyprus-mail.com/2019/01/09/facebook-user-fined-for-insulting-couple-who-adopted-asian-girl/>, KISA Press Release, January 11, 2019, available at <https://kisa.org.cy/landmark-conviction-against-racism-in-social-media/>

<sup>36</sup> Cyprus Mail, "Journalists union condemns death threat against Politis reporter", July 26, 2018, available at <https://cyprus-mail.com/2018/07/26/journalists-union-condemns-death-threat-against-politis-reporter/>

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/groups/531548123664733/>

<sup>38</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/groups/407388069378889/>

## Αλλοδαποί ισλαμιστές επιτέθηκαν με σκεπάρνι στους πιστούς στην εκκλησία της Φανερωμένης

5 Απριλίου 2018



churchgoers present at mass. Based on eyewitnesses, the news was transmitted by a particular journalist at Sigmalive, who was at the church and unsuccessfully intervened in the incident. The next day, ELAM published a statement titled *“Foreign Muslim fundamentalists attacked the faithful at the church of Faneromeni with an adze”*. Within the statement, the party declared that *“the foreign troublemakers were Muslim fundamentalists, who acted in an organised manner and attacked the faithful to cause harm and intimidate them, during these Holy days of Orthodox Christianity.”* These provided an excuse for a storm of commentary on social media that spread hate and even reached the point of calls for extreme reactions, even including physical violence, to face the alleged phenomenon that had been claimed to occur systematically and was resulting in Christian Greek-Cypriots being at risk on a daily basis. After thorough investigation on the facts of the incident, KISA had to intervene with a public statement and call for the media to stand up to their responsibility to confirm the news they (re)produce, especially when it relates to hate speech and incitement to hate crime<sup>39</sup>.

<sup>39</sup> KISA Press Release, April 16, 2018, available at <https://kisa.org.cy/elam-and-part-of-the-media-have-turned-juvenile-delinquency-into-an-inter-religious-and-racial-war/>

ii) In September 2018, the news on an alleged attack to a female who works at the Kofinou refugee camp (Reception Center for asylum seekers) by an asylum seeker, filled the pages of groups and personal profiles in social media, mostly from the populist and far-right front. The facts were that the asylum seeker who had been waiting for the examination of his application for

international protection for more than two years, asked for a bus ticket (according to the regulations) in order to go to Nicosia where the Asylum Service is located and ask for updates on his case. His request was rejected on the basis of a change in the rules and, as a result of this additional restriction of his rights, he was really upset and started cursing, but under no circumstances he attacked the Center’s employee. When the guards intervened to restore order, another asylum seeker who is known to have alcohol issues and was drunk at the time, attacked them for his own, different reasons. This attack was presented by the fake news publishers as an attack with a knife by the first asylum seeker, calling for immediate action against all migrants and asylum seekers and presenting them all as criminals. KISA again intervened with a public statement putting the actual facts in order and warning on the danger these fake news spread entail<sup>40</sup>.

iii) In September 2017, a Cypriot single mother of three published on her Facebook page a document stating the amount of the social benefit that a recognised refugee and his family

<sup>40</sup> KISA Press Release, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018, available in Greek at <https://kisa.org.cy/fake-news-me-stoho-tin-ipothalpsi-tou-misous-tou-ratsismou-kai-tis-misallodoxias/>

were receiving, which was allegedly very high compared to hers. The publication soon received various comments, followed by articles on online news pages reproducing the complaint<sup>41</sup>. ELAM intervened, calling for explanations from the government and the competent ministries on this matter of great injustice against the Cypriot nationals<sup>42</sup>. A representative of the Ministry of Labour declared that the document was falsifying what the case really was, as the amount given to the targeted family of recognised refugees was right according to the law and the specific needs of a seven-members family, adding that the same applies to Cypriot families as well.

### g. Hate speech and activists/civil society

Organisations and groups of people resisting the ever rising nationalistic, racist, islamophobic rhetoric and politics that have taken over both political speech and social conscience, are being constantly targeted as “traitors”, “anti-Greeks”, “the enemy’s agents”:

i) In July 2018, journalist Maria Siakalli was targeted for her participation in the preparation of “*Words that matter: a glossary for journalism in Cyprus*”<sup>43</sup>. The publication, supported by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), was prepared by four journalists - two Greek Cypriots and two Turkish Cypriots- who monitored the language used by local media for a period of six months. They identified the most controversial terminology, looked for less conflictual alternatives, and provided a list of 56 words that journalists from both sides covering the Cyprus problem are invited to

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.tothemaonline.com/Article/94352/lemesos-moysoylmanos-politikos-prosfygas-phre-2174-eyrw-se-enamhna--kypria-monogonios-me-tria-paidia-lambanei-500---eggrafo>



<sup>42</sup> <https://www.tothemaonline.com/Article/94365/elam-gia-mhnaio-epidoma-2174-eyrw-se-politiko-prosfyga-exhghseis-apo-kybernhsh-kai-armodio-yporgo>

<sup>43</sup>

<https://www.rcmediafreedom.eu/Publications/Reports/Words-that-matter-a-Glossary-for-Journalism-in-Cyprus>

reconsider and opt to use so as to avoid inciting a rhetoric of tension. Two weeks before its official presentation, 210 journalists signed a petition<sup>44</sup> condemning the intent of the glossary. The statement by Phileleftheros, the major daily newspaper in Cyprus, read: "We have to tell them that we will continue to call the 'Cyprus Peace Operation' an invasion". Siakalli defended the glossary, being in return attacked by at least 27 different accounts that threatened her with death or rape, both on her wall and by private messages on Facebook. They called her a traitor of her country, sold to Turkey's interests. In the profile pictures of the users who attacked her stand out Greek flags and posts shared from extreme right-wing websites. Many articles were also published in online newspapers, ironically referring to Siakalli as an 'independent' expert of OSCE and her part in the glossary as 'the big project of undermining Cyprus' interests'. Even the official government of Cyprus lashed out against the publication, stating that had it been aware of the project, it would have opposed it.

ii) In March 2019, KISA sent an open letter to the competent authorities in relation to EAK's (National Liberation Movement) statements and activities. EAK is a far-right, pro-military movement, declared to be the successor of EOKA B, that seeks Cyprus' union with Greece through armed struggle. Its supporters aim at 'cleansing' Cyprus from Turkish-Cypriots and Turks and constantly use hate speech and incitement to hate crimes towards that end. In its letter<sup>45</sup>, KISA recalled various past incidents of hate speech and attacks from the part of EAK

<sup>44</sup> <https://cyprus-mail.com/2018/06/29/journalists-sign-petition-condemning-bicommunal-glossary/>

<sup>45</sup> Available in Greek at <https://kisa.org.cy/%CE%B1%CE%BD%CE%BF%CE%B9%CE%BA%CF%84%CE%B7-%CE%B5%CF%80%CE%B9%CF%83%CF%84%CE%BF%CE%BB%CE%B7-%CE%BA%CE%B9%CF%83%CE%B1-%CF%80%CF%81%CE%BF%CF%83->

and called for investigations as to its legality. Following this and on the convenient occasion of an arson at their offices, EAK (National Liberation Movement) issued a statement<sup>46</sup> that was directly targeting both KISA as an organisation and its leadership personally. It held that " *Turkish-friendly, agents of the enemy organisations attempted arson at offices of the Movement*", even naming KISA as the perpetrators stating " *the pro- foreigners organisation of KISA, and the well-known father of illegal immigrants, its executive director are the first to be suspected for this attack...* ". KISA again condemned the false accusations and called for further investigation which, however, was never initiated up to date.

iii) An incident of serious mistreatment, humiliating and degrading treatment by a police officer of a Turkish citizen in August 2017<sup>47</sup>, sparked hatred against rights defenders and activists that stood up for justice to the victim. The Turkish citizen, who lives with his family in the areas not under the control of the Government of the Republic, went through the Ledra Palace check point on a bicycle, without realising that he was liable to be stopped and checked. Immediately after crossing the check point, he was followed by a Police officer in a patrol car who instructed him to return and the complainant immediately complied with. At the Police post, the same policeman, for no reason or provocation whatsoever, started beating him with his hands. The complainant lost his balance and fell off his bike, after which the policeman started to kick him. The incident occurred in front of citizens watching and urging the policeman to stop. The

[https://eakcy.com/?p=6594&fbclid=IwAR32KIMgFFBwt5daCgG5xPOjmqyAPAWeAN5Oh-x-D0\\_jUCgETUZMPX7aAg0](https://eakcy.com/?p=6594&fbclid=IwAR32KIMgFFBwt5daCgG5xPOjmqyAPAWeAN5Oh-x-D0_jUCgETUZMPX7aAg0)

<sup>46</sup> Available in Greek at [https://eakcy.com/?p=6594&fbclid=IwAR32KIMgFFBwt5daCgG5xPOjmqyAPAWeAN5Oh-x-D0\\_jUCgETUZMPX7aAg0](https://eakcy.com/?p=6594&fbclid=IwAR32KIMgFFBwt5daCgG5xPOjmqyAPAWeAN5Oh-x-D0_jUCgETUZMPX7aAg0)  
<sup>47</sup> <https://www.dailysabah.com/eu-affairs/2017/09/06/turkish-man-beaten-by-greek-cypriot-police-at-nicosia-border-crossing-kept-in-custody-for-the-last-5-days>

policeman then took the man inside the station, where he continued beating him in front of another policeman who did nothing to stop him, pouring water and then something like cologne on his wounds, which resulted in even more excruciating pain.

KISA reported the mistreatment on the same day to the Independent Authority for the Investigation of Allegations and Complaints against the Police (IAIACP), while many citizens gave written and oral evidence on the incident. The Police initially attempted, as per their usual practice in such cases, to accuse the man for, amongst others, causing real bodily harm against policemen, for resisting arrest and assault against a law enforcement agent. KISA's

and the watching citizens' immediate reports<sup>48</sup> to AADIPA were instrumental in the Attorney General Office to order a criminal investigation of the citizen's complaints on the police officer's actions that could constitute actual body harm, attack and abuse of power.

These immediate actions taken by KISA, together with the willingness of the eyewitnesses to testify over the actual facts of the incident, gave rise to hate speech comments from the usual nationalist and far-right front, attacking both the organisation and the witnesses personally for covering up and working for the 'enemy'.

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<sup>48</sup>KISA Press Release, September 17, 2017, available at <https://kisa.org.cy/legal-action-against-the-state-by-the-victim-of-police-violence/>

## 4. The most important counter-narratives to be implemented

The conservative front in Cyprus, that constitutes a large part of the society, invokes specific stereotypes, offensive discourse, falsified narratives amounting to stigma against vulnerable groups, in its effort to consolidate its nationalistic and discriminatory views. The lack of awareness raising and holistic education of the public opinion on minorities' rights gives more and more ground to the following narratives:

### a. The take-over by the Turks/ 'Turkifying' Cyprus

The dominant narrative of hate speech is the idea that the Turks are the great, 'eternal' enemy of the Greek-Cypriot nation and therefore, linked to almost every other narrative on other groups. The supporters of this narrative claim that, historically, Turkey had interests in Cyprus due to the presence of the Turkish-Cypriot community, which interests resulted in Turkey's military invasion in 1974 and the division of the country. However, Turkey's greater plan is to take-over the whole island and expel any Greek-Cypriot element.

To this end, Turks use every indirect policy that can 'turkify' Cyprus, while the extreme supporters of the narrative (nationalists and the far-right) strongly believe these policies are simply Turkey's preparatory moves of a war to come. According to them, migrants and refugees are Turkey's alliances sent to the areas controlled by the Republic of Cyprus in order to consolidate Turkey's presence and prepare the supposedly coming war against the Greek-Cypriots.

Also connected to the eternal enemy narrative, the British (the so-called 'Englezi') are stereotyped as the historical strategic partner of Turkey, always ready to betray Cyprus in favour of the enemy and their own interests. Historically, they have been accused of inciting hatred among the Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots and fuelling intercommunal clashes, but also facilitating Turkey's 1974 invasion.

### b. Change of the demographic structure and national identity

Strongly connected to the "eternal enemy" narrative, is the idea that Turkey's main objective is to gradually settle to the whole island and wipe out the Greek national identity.

In the areas not effectively controlled by the Republic of Cyprus ('the North', 'the occupied areas'), Turkey's government has, since 1974, implemented a policy of systematic colonisation in order to establish their presence and power and change the demographic character of the island. These settlers come from the Turkish mainland and are of Turkish citizenship, their estimated population being 150,000 - 160,000. They represent Turkey's efforts to distort the



ΥΠΕΡΑΣΠΙΖΟΜΑΣΤΕ ΤΙΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΙΑΝΙΚΕΣ ΑΞΙΕΣ ΣΤΗΝ ΕΥΡΩΠΗ

Στην ΕΕ υπερασπιζόμαστε τις Οικουμενικές Αξίες της Ορθοδοξίας και του Χριστιανισμού. Όσοι διώκουν τους Χριστιανικούς Λαούς και τη Χριστιανική Πίστη δεν έχουν θέση στην ΕΕ και δεν πρέπει να τυχάνουν καμίας χρηματοδότησης από τα Ευρωπαϊκά Ταμεία. Η Τουρκία κατέστρεψε τον Ελληνοχριστιανικό Πολιτισμό στα κατεχόμενα και εξεδίωξε τους Έλληνες Χριστιανούς από τη πατρίδα γη, γιατί οφείλει η ΕΕ να αντιδράσει με μέτρα.

WE SUPPORT CHRISTAIN VALUES IN EUROPE

In the EU we support the holy values of Orthodoxy and Christianity. Those who persecute the Christian peoples and the Christian faith have no place in the EU and they should not benefit from any funding from European funds. Turkey destroyed Greco Christian civilization in the occupied areas and they expelled the Greek Christians from their fatherland, and for this reason the EU should react duly through actions.



population balance on the island between Turks and Greeks, to shift the balance of political power and to ethnically cleanse the occupied areas and consequently the areas controlled by the Republic of Cyprus.

There is deep hatred amongst the public opinion against the settlers, who are described as uncivilised people and war criminals that stole Greek-Cypriot's properties.

Within the same context, the Turkish-Cypriot community is considered to be Turkey's extended arm, its obedient poor relation and the mouthpiece of its policies, while they are stereotyped as not reliable and trustworthy people.

Moreover, migrants are believed to be 'illegal migrants' that enter the Republic of Cyprus through the North under the instructions of Turkey. They are believed to be the Trojan horse of Turkey in its 'masterplan' to change the demography of the South and achieve a gradual settlement and full control of the island.

### **c. Migrants, refugees, asylum seekers**

#### **i) Abusers of social assistance**

Migrants, refugees and asylum seekers<sup>49</sup> are portrayed as idle, lazy persons that only rely on social assistance as their income. While the state is exercising its social policy and commitments under European and international law (e.g. reception conditions for applicants for international protection), the views that are circulated present them as plunders of the social benefits. They are even accused of receiving higher state benefits than Cypriots, also being the scapegoats for the economic crisis.

Asylum seekers and refugees in particular, are identified to migrants due to complete ignorance of

the asylum legal framework and the situation in the countries of their origin. People often accuse them of not being 'real refugees' and of abusing the system in order to get advantage of its benefits. The extreme form of this narrative presents them as terrorists who are coming in Cyprus in order to operate an attack to Europe.

Migrants are commonly associated with the rising unemployment. During the first migratory moving during the 1990's, Cyprus was indeed seeking foreign workers in order to respond to the augmented needs of its rising economy. Back then, it was agreed that Cypriot workers would be prioritised for these posts (a prerequisite that still exists in law for Cypriots and EU nationals) and that foreigner's remuneration would be reasonable and not low, in order to avoid the creation and exploitation of a cheap labour force that would undermine the employment of locals. Despite the numerous incidents of labour trafficking and exploitation of migrants, this stereotype gains more attention especially since 2013, when Cyprus entered the economic crisis.

#### **ii) Threat to society, security, increase of criminality**

In particular Muslim migrants, refugees and asylum seekers are seen as savages with a tendency to criminality, alienated from the western civilisation. The dominant belief is that that their presence here constitutes a threat to our religious identity and that Cyprus is in great danger of islamisation.

This narrative of islamisation of Cyprus - methodically supported by the spread of fake news- serves as a useful tool in terms of political speech in two ways; firstly, it is connected with the narrative of Turkey as the eternal enemy and then, it is also linked to terrorism. As a result, the public opinion is constructed around sentiments of fear, hate and fanaticism against the multiple enemies.

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<sup>49</sup> These target groups are affected in a different way according to their other specific characteristics (religion, gender) that add to the discrimination already faced.

### iii) Migrant women

This is a particularly vulnerable group being both female and of migratory status. Filipino and Sri Lankan women are only viewed as house maids, while Vietnamese migrant women were long stereotyped as prostitutes.

### d. Rights defenders as traitors

Activists, rights defenders, members of movements for progressive and social rights are continuously accused as traitors of the country, who undermine the national security, sovereignty and identity by defending 'aliens', 'blackies', 'arabs', 'faggots'. People who are active with migrants and refugees are stigmatised as enemies, opponents of the 'Greek nation', while those who are pro-solution defenders and get involved with Turkish-Cypriots towards that end, are seen as Turkey's agents, facilitating Turkey's interests in taking over the country.

### e. LGBTQI community as a threat to social and moral values

Discrimination and hate speech against LGBTQI people are a usual behaviour within the Cypriot society deeply rooted in the conservatism and 'religiousness' that cuts across the social conscience of Cypriots. Homosexuals are directly or indirectly stigmatised as a threat for the holy notion of family and moral values, which are in fact identical to religious values.



“έχουμε πέρα των 300 000 εποίκων, οι οποίοι είναι ανατολίτες, άξεστοι, δεν πρόκειται να γίνουν Ευρωπαίοι ούτε μετά από 100 χρόνια και.... Αν μείνουν εδώ, γεννοβολούν και μια δωδεκάδα παιδιά η κάθε οικογένεια, που θα πάμε;»

**"we have more than 300 000 settlers, who are Anatolians, without any manners, they will never become Europeans even in 100 years. .. If they stay here, they overbreed and with a dozen children in each family, where will we go, what will happen to us? "**

## 5. The most relevant initiatives promoted by civil society to countering the current trends hate speech

### a. *Monitoring and research*

The European Network Against Racism (ENAR, a network of Non-Governmental Organizations across Europe) publish annual reports on racism in Europe, which contain information on racist and religious hate speech.

The information collected therein, constitute a significant indicator as the challenges people targeted by hate speech face and can be used in awareness campaigns aimed at civil society in order to deconstruct the prejudices on which hate speech is based. As a result, better understanding of the plurality and complexity of minority issues can lead to denouncing the inconsistencies and social injustices at the root of the stigmatization processes facing minorities.

### b. *Monitoring platform*

The eMORE project is an initiative funded by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union, focusing on integrating technologies, research, and the expertise of the eMORE partners in the fields of hate rhetoric and discrimination. It is an online reporting system that enable victims to report incidents of hate crime and hate speech. It was established by multiple institutions (non-profit organisations, local police, campaigns run by the Council of Europe) across EU Member States. Strategies and practices are under development in order to monitor and carry out reporting mechanisms on hate speech and hate crime.

### c. *Codes of conduct*

A common agreement between the Cyprus Union of Journalists, the Cyprus Publishers Association and the Owners of Electronic Mass Communication Media, resulted in adopting a Journalist's Code of Practice<sup>50</sup>, together with initiating the operation of a Journalistic Ethics Commission (the Cyprus Media Complaints Commission, CMCC, as already mentioned). Article 7 of the Code, gives specific

guidelines as to the presentation of topics about migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and human trafficking victims. Although this is an important step towards combatting hate speech, it is our view that the Commission could have a more active role in monitoring such incidents and most importantly, in initiating ex officio reviews of media content that could constitute hate speech.

To this end of an accountable journalism, more emphasis should be given to the Explanatory Guidelines that the Commission has published regarding the specific article. As stated therein, "where issues of migration and asylum are presented by the Mass Media in a manner which contains prejudice regarding the aforementioned properties, the result is the creation of xenophobic feelings which goes on to exacerbate social phenomena rooted on the intolerance of diversity. An example of the Mass Media creating prejudice is reference to national and racial origin when these characteristics do not form substantial elements of the story. This particular practice is mostly observed in stories concerning crimes or offences or for any other reason reflecting negatively on individuals or groups, where the national or racial origin or solely the fact that the perpetrator or victim is not a Cypriot is underlined in the report. Conversely, in similar cases regarding Cypriots, nationality is not considered part of the story and is almost never mentioned. This particular practice contributes to the creation of feelings of xenophobia, hostility, revulsion and intolerance against foreigners as a whole.

In the same manner, other rights of migrants are often violated, though respected for Cypriots. For instance, the violation of the presumption of innocence, the publication of photographs taken during their arrest or transfer to court, their right to privacy and non-disclosure of personal details. Oftentimes, xenophobic statements are published and broadcasted because on several occasions they are made by well-known persons, as was repeatedly the case during live discussions or statements made on TV and radio stations; or allegations are put forward by members of the

<sup>50</sup> Available at [http://www.cmcc.org.cy/code\\_practice2.html](http://www.cmcc.org.cy/code_practice2.html)

public, usually without allowing arguments to the contrary or the other perspective to be heard. When reporting on issues pertaining to migration sympathy must be shown to people forced to risk their own lives or the lives of their children for a better life. The obligation of states to provide refugees with help and protection must also be displayed, as well as positive actions”.

#### d. Initiatives

i) Throughout KISA’s operations, it has been noticed that a significant gap is the lack of a comprehensive action plan against hate speech. This should, at the same time and with equivalent importance, include *research*, *recording* and *tackling*. But most importantly, it is the people themselves that should be at the heart of such an action plan. They should be effectively supported in order to assert their rights but also, to achieve the moral benefit of their demands when dealt with properly. Moreover, the sub-components of such an action plan must complement each other; awareness-raising, monitoring, legal assistance and/or remedies, judicial control and review, are all inter-related. In order to face up hate speech, we cannot deal with one without also resorting to the other.

KISA is currently setting up a project to support Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) and civil society in making incidents of hate speech visible among the Cypriot society, that being the first step to tackle hate speech and address related fundamental rights violations. The specific objectives of the project are:

- **to strengthen the capacity** of LEAs, NGOs and community-based organizations to identify and report hate speech and to interact with victims;
- **to improve data collection** on hate speech by creating and implementing standard methodologies and tools for data collection aimed at LEAs and civil society organizations;

- **to strengthen networking** and collaboration between LEAs and civil society –on a national and international level– in information exchange and follow up on hate speech.

The combination of activities of social intervention and the operation of services as well as the strong ties with the migrant and refugee communities enable KISA to have a very accurate and updated picture about the realities in the areas of its mandate.

In addition to the monitoring mission, the research activity on hate speech in Cyprus could contribute to the construction of qualitative knowledge. Sociological research on hate speech and juridical research on the legal means available to guarantee human rights, allow a normative reflection. This approach can in fact educate society on how to conceptualize the law or legal entities (laws, sanctions, and rights).

Although there have been some progressive policy and practice developments led by civil society organisations and researchers, it still remains difficult to monitor the impact of these initiatives and progress towards equality due to the lack of consistent and continuous data collection.

ii) Training destined to authorities

The establishment of modules or workshops destined to the authorities’ personnel in charge of collecting official data on hate speech could enhance their effectiveness in detecting and confronting hate speech. This would contribute to bridging their lack of knowledge in terms of crime punishable by law so that they are not only able to identify them and fulfil their normative function, but also to make them aware that current police practices can even be unlawful, also warn them that they can also be subject to legal recourse.

Indeed, many times authorities do not identify the crime as hate speech, or victims don't report it to Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) out of fear and lack of trust in authorities. Alike, most of the time LEAs, non-governmental organizations or victim support groups don't have the specific knowledge to identify and report correctly this type of crimes. As a result, many crimes remain invisible. In such cases, the rights of victims may not be fully respected or protected, meaning that Cyprus as EU Member States is not upholding its obligations towards victims.

The work of decommodification of hate speech would allow a better identification of the forms that they can take in the society. Similarly, qualitative research on hate speech could produce better data collection tools than the forms used by the authorities. Indeed, tools such as questionnaires are particularly suited to reflect the plurality of possible situations in which hate speech may be held.

#### **e. Production of information materials**

To reach the goals of raise awareness on hate speech, improve civil society abilities in making hate speech visible, and fight hate speech based on racism and xenophobia, the project will act on different levels and settings:

- 1. Training** on hate crimes, particularly aimed at members of LEAs, NGOs and community-based organizations.
- 2. Information and communication** about hate speeches reporting, also using data collection

tool and mechanisms of information exchange between civil society and LEAs

- 3. Dissemination** of knowledge and best practices against hate speeches.

Finally, it is expected that the campaign will help raising public awareness on equality, the consequences of hate speech as well as the benefits of eliminating it. With the completion of each activity, a number of tangible outputs will be produced, including manuals, research reports and audio-visual and printed materials as well intangible ones such as seminars and conferences. The target audience varies depending on each of the proposed activity. It ranges from policy makers to the general public, experts and professionals. Similarly, the beneficiaries differ based upon the activities thought that some of the outputs of certain activities are intangible, the beneficiary is considered to be the society as a whole.

#### **The outcome: materials and instruments**

- Training sessions
- Handbook
- Didactical package
- Videos
- Data collection tools
- Reports

## 6. Conclusions

Hate speech is a temporal issue in Cyprus deeply rooted in the country's historical background and targeting all vulnerable groups (migrants, refugees, LGBTQI persons, women, Turkish Cypriots, Muslims, disabled persons, persons with serious diseases and health syndromes). Stereotypes, discriminatory behaviours, intolerance and hate against the "other" are part of what is now the social conscience of the majority of Cypriots, even in cases where they are not directly expressed as such.

Strongly connected to the British colonization, the intense relations between Greece and Turkey and therefore, those between Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots, hate speech was used within these backgrounds to target the other.

In their pursuit of a national identity, Greek-Cypriots consolidated it as a part of the Greek nation, while at the same time they identified the Turks with the notion of the "eternal enemy" that was seeking to establish its power through the Turkish-Cypriot community. Nationalism has played a dominant role throughout this historical background. Nationalists of the two communities, used hate speech to dominate over the other and to justify the inter-ethnic hate crimes they had committed, while the 1974 Turkish invasion established the nationalistic rhetoric in the public sphere.

When Cyprus joined the European Union and had to abide by the European framework on asylum and migration, nationalism fell on fertile ground to also target minority groups of asylum seekers and migrant workers. The rise of the far-right and its influence on political speech and social conscience succeeded to normalise hate speech, while at the same time, the circumstances of economic crisis and increased unemployment favoured the dissemination of feelings of xenophobia, racism and hostility against migrants.

While the legal framework covering hate speech exists, it is inadequate, incoherent and selectively applied to hate speech incidents. Two main problematics resulting from this, are the unreporting/under-reporting and the under-qualification of such incidents:

Hate speech incidents are either not identified and recorded properly, or even if properly recorded they are not prosecuted most of the times because of they are not substantiated, according to the authorities.

Based on our information and experience "on the ground", hate crime incidents are far more common than official data suggest. This is because very often victims will not report their experience at all or they will report it as a discrimination act. Another common reason is their mistrust to the rule of law and fear of putting themselves in lengthy procedures without being justified. Victims are often undocumented migrants who will not officially report their experience as the common practice of the police is to arrest undocumented migrants and detain them for deportation reasons, even when they are victims. Lastly, there is lack of expertise of the police and authorities as to identify and investigate hate speech. This results in the under-qualification of the incidents that are indeed reported, but not identified as hate crimes and they are therefore investigated under the general Penal Code, without taking into account the hate motive.

Hate speech is dominant in the public sphere; public figures, including politicians, members of the government, church officials and journalists, often employ hate speech in their statements, without any consequences whatsoever. The mainstream media make regular use of hate speech, especially against migrants and refugees while the use of discriminatory speech in the social media is uncontrollable. The influence exerted by the far-right on the stance and shaping of policies and political speech of conservative parties and politicians, as well as the resonance of its attitudes in society, is also alarming. Together

with the far-right neo-Nazi party ELAM, other organisations have also taken over its racist speech and actions, carrying the banner for “militant” nationalism.

Law Enforcement Agencies and authorities charged with monitoring hate speech react in an extremely segregated manner if at all, and under the pressure of the civil society organisations. This cover of impunity further normalises the use of hate speech. Essentially, the Attorney General, the ultimate institution for the protection of the rule of law and human rights, has repeatedly downplayed grave incidents of hate speech on the grounds of public safety and public interest, while at the same time he has been pointing out rights defenders for bringing up these matters.

The initiatives carried out by the civil society organisations contribute in informing and reporting on hate speech but cannot eliminate it without the adoption of a comprehensive action plan that will cover every aspect of the matter.

To summarise, it is our view that the following strategies and policies against hate speech should be adopted without further delay:

- Campaign and educate on the actual notion of hate speech and the extent of its use, adopting an intersectional analysis and taking into account migrants, refugees, women, LGBTI persons.
- Collect data in partnership with civil society organisations, not only from police records.

- Establish clear, independent and active mechanisms to monitor the use of hate speech.
- Law 134(I)/2011 must be amended to define, apart from racist and/ or xenophobic motive, other hate motives, and specifically, homophobic, sexist, transphobic, ableist and ageist motives, as aggravating factors too on the imposition of penalties.
- Deliver specialised training in identifying, recording, preventing and combating hate speech and discriminatory practices to LEAs on a regular basis, including bias motivations, focusing on the implementation of the law.
- Deliver training to prosecuting authorities focusing on the implementation of the law, so as to ensure that hate speech will be prosecuted and punished as such.
- Legal aid and independent support should be provided to victims of hate speech, so as to enable them to effectively pursue their rights and trust that they will be indeed justified.
- Improve communication between CSOs and LEAs for the purpose of investigating hate crime incidents.

## APPENDIX

### Incidents and/or Cases of Racial Nature and/or with Racial Motive 2005-2018

(Last update: April 2019)

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Subtotal (2005 - 2014)*	Total
<b>Incidents</b>	2	18	3	6	8	34	16	14	8	11	11	17	27	30	120	205
<b>1. Records</b>	1	1	0	2	1	2	2	5	3	5	0	1	16	19	22	58
<b>2. Criminal Investigations</b>	1	17	3	4	7	32	14	9	5	6	11	16	11	11	98	147
Undetected, Non existent, 2.1 Otherwise Disposed, Non Police nature	0	1	1	3	4	5	7	5	0	3	3	6	3		29	41
2.2 Being reviewed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	8	0	9
2.3 In Abeyance	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2		1	3
2.4 Filed in Court	1	16	2	1	3	27	6	4	5	3	8	9	6	3	68	94
2.3.1 Pending in Court	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	5	2	3	0	13
2.3.2 Suspension, Interruption, Nolle prosequi	0	0	2	0	2	4	3	1	1	1	2	3	2	0	14	21
2.3.3 Acquittal	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	5	6
2.3.4 Conviction	0	16	0	1	1	21	3	2	3	2	3	1	1	0	49	54

Source: Office for Combating Discrimination, Crime Combating Department, Police Headquarters

\*For this period no cases are pending before the court

Charges of a racist nature were raised

### Complainants / Accused In Incidents and/or Cases of Racial Nature and/or with Racial Motive 2005-2018

(Last update: April 2019)

Year	Complainants / Victims	Accused /Perpetrators	Total
2005	6	1	7
2006	22	14	36
2007	3	4	7
2008	11	16	27
2009	9	14	23
2010	58	46	104
2011	29	45	74
2012	16	32	48
2013	11	16	27
2014	20	14	34
2015	12	22	34
2016	18	26	44
2017	36	42	78
2018	35	42	77
<b>Total</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>620</b>

**Nationality / Ethnic Origin of Complainants in Incidents and/or Cases of Racial Nature and/or with Racial Motive 2005-2018**

(Last update: April 2019)

<b>Nationality</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>Total</b>
Egypt								1							1
Ivory Coast									1						1
Armenia														1	1
Bulgaria				2				1	3		1	2		1	10
Germany						1			1				1	3	6
Georgia						4			1			1	2		8
Ghana								1							1
Guinea												1			1
Dominican Republic						1									1
Greek Cypriot	3				1	28	12	5		2	2	4	17	8	82
Greece		15						2			1		1	2	21
United Kingdom				3		4			1					1	9
United States of America		1			1									1	3
India						3	1								4
Jordan							1							2	3
Iraq							2							1	3
Iran													1		1
Ireland						4									4
Israel						1		2		4				1	8
Kenya								1							1
China							1							1	2
Kurdistan			1						2						3
Croatia								1							1
Latvia														1	1
Lebanon								1							1
Bangladesh			1			4	1								6
Benin	1									2					3
Nigeria					1	1									2
Pakistan									1	1					2
Palestine						2	5								7
Romania	1			1			3					1	2	4	12
Russia														1	1
Syria											1	2	1	1	5
Sudan				1											1
Turkish Cypriot	1	6	1	4	5	4				4	5	3	10	6	49
Turkey									1						1
Zimbabwe					1										1
Philippines													1		1
Unspecified						1	1	3		7	2	4			18
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>286</b>

### Nationality / Ethnic Origin of Accused in Incidents and/or Cases of Racial Nature and/or with Racial Motive 2005-2018

(Last update: April 2019)

Nationality	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
Egypt				1	2									1	4
Georgia			1												1
Greek Cypriot	1	14	2	15	6	35	43	21	14	13	22	26	33	25	270
United Kingdom						1		1							2
Jordan					1			1							2
Kenya								1							1
Kurdistan														1	1
Pakistan					1										1
Palestine						6	2								8
Romania					1					1			1	1	4
Syria					2										2
Unspecified			1		1	4		8	2				8	14	38
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>334</b>

### Motive in Incidents and/or Cases of Racial Nature and/or with Racial Motive 2005-2018

(Last update: April 2019)

Motive	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
Language							1	1							2
Special needs								1					1		2
Nationality / Ethnic origin	2	17	3	6	4	26	12	7	4	1	3	8	15	13	121
Age															0
Religion		1			3	1		1	1	1		3	3	1	15
Community					1	1				3	6	4	10	10	35
Political views	1	16			2	3	2		1				4	1	30
Sexual orientation							1	3	1	3		1	1	9	19
Race		1			1	3		1			1				7
Gender															0
Color	1		1		2	5	9	1	2	4	1	3	1	3	33
Unspecified						1									1
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>265</b>