

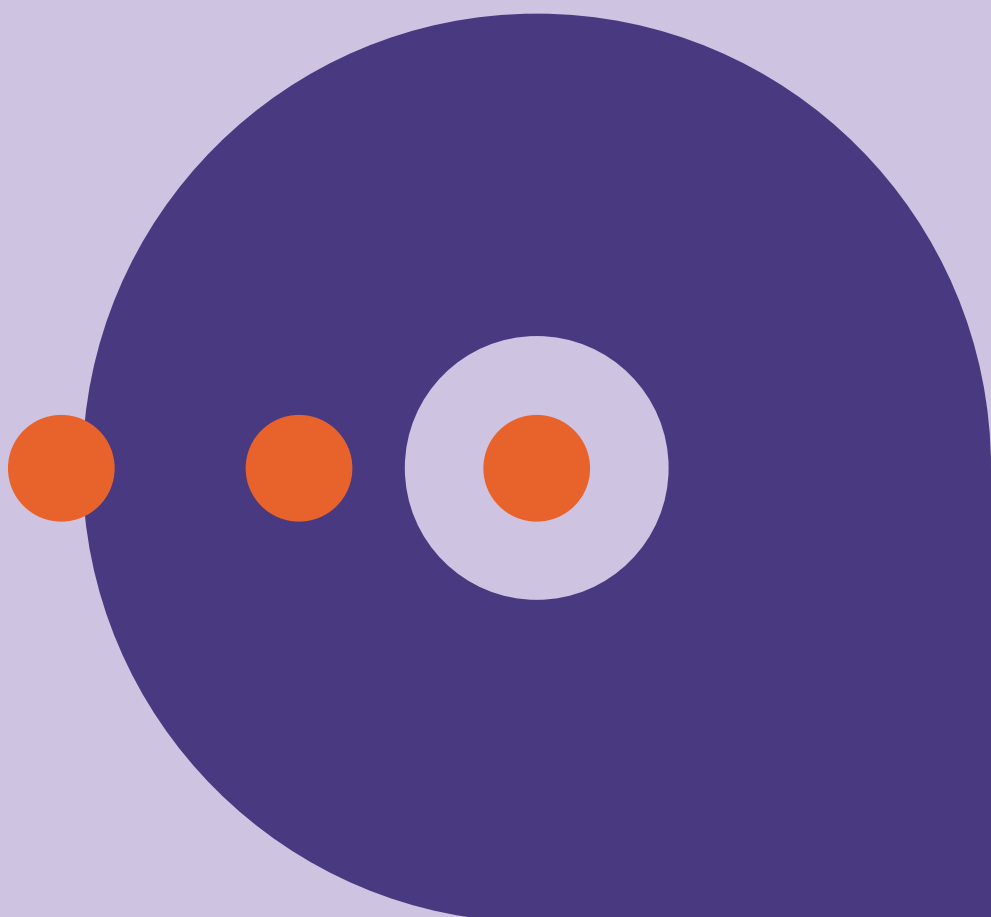
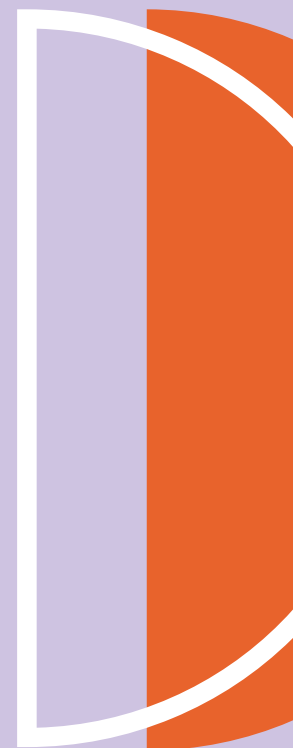
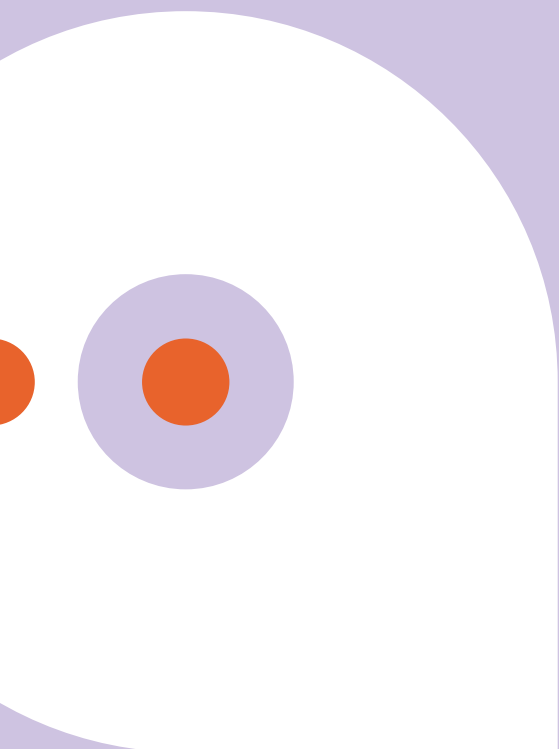


European
Commission

EUROPEAN CITIZENS' PANELS

TACKLING HATRED IN SOCIETY

Information **Kit**



About this Kit

Welcome to the European Citizens' Panel on Tackling Hatred in Society.

First of all, thank you for agreeing to participate in this process. We hope you find it informative, interesting and enjoyable! You are one of 150 participants randomly selected from all 27 EU Member States to discuss how to tackle hatred in Europe.

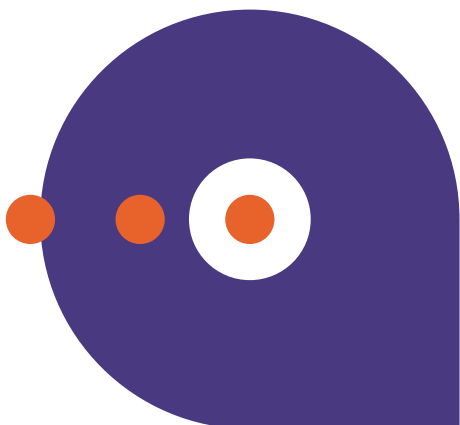
According to several reports and data, Europe today is experiencing an alarming increase in hate speech and hate crime. Not only does hatred wound the individuals, groups and communities directly targeted, but it also generates polarisation and inhibits a free and vibrant democratic debate. Manifestations of hatred undermine society as a whole and threaten the foundations of our democracies.

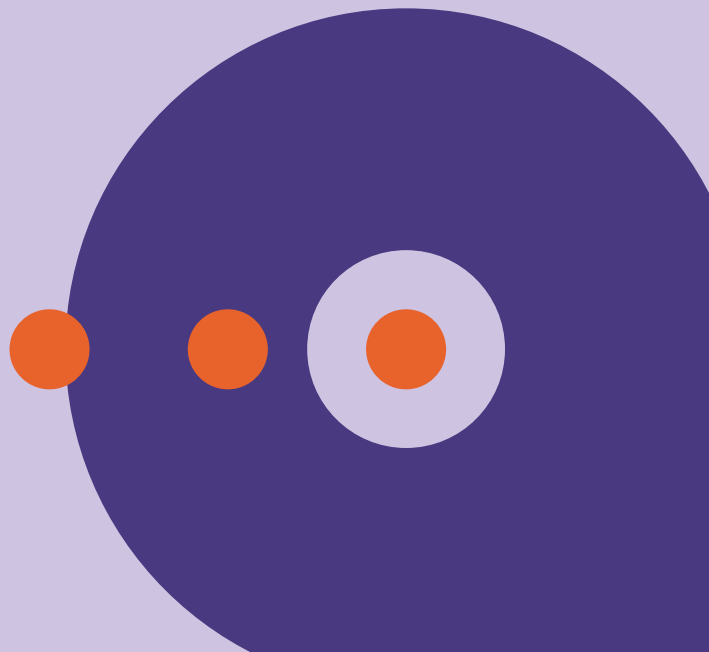
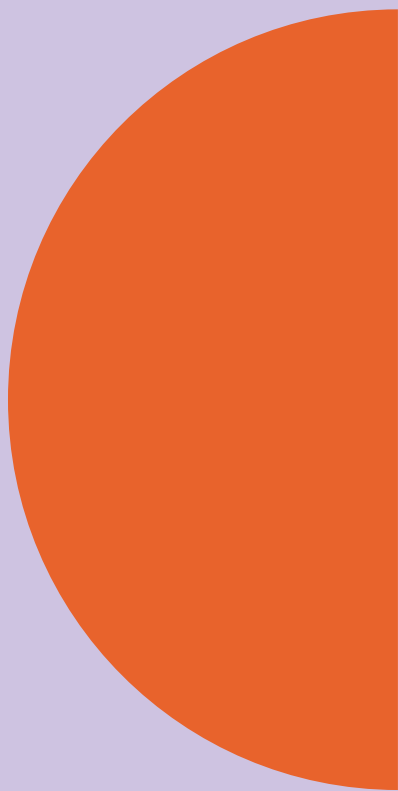
On 6 December 2023, the European Commission and the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs adopted a Joint Communication on 'No place for hate: a Europe united against hatred'. This Communication calls for the creation of an open, pan-European space for dialogue which brings together citizens from across the EU to discuss ways to move from hatred and division to the shared enjoyment of our European values of equality, respect for human rights and dignity. This European Citizens' Panel on tackling hatred in society is a response to this call, and we thank you for agreeing to participate in this debate.

Together with the other participants, you will look into different ways we can all - EU institutions, Member States, civil society organisations, media, and other actors - contribute to tackle hatred in society and reaffirm equality, respect for human rights and dignity.

This 'Information Kit' serves to guide you through the process. It is structured in four sections.

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1/ Process:

What are European Citizens' Panels

BACKGROUND

The Citizens' Panels of the European Commission bring together randomly selected participants from all 27 EU Member States to discuss key upcoming laws and other initiatives at European level.

The Panels came about following the Conference on the Future of Europe¹ that took place in 2021-2022. Back then, 800 randomly selected citizens gathered to share their perspectives and ideas on topics like the economy, social justice, jobs, education, culture, youth, sports, digital transformation, EU democracy, values, security, rule of law, climate change, health, migration, and the EU's role in the world.

When the Conference closed on 9 May 2022, participants put forward 178 recommendations. These formed the basis for 49 proposals and more than 300 related measures resulting from the Conference. The citizens participating in the Conference called for similar, more frequent opportunities for citizens to participate in European policy-making in the future. In response, the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, announced the organisation of further European Citizens' Panels to consult randomly selected citizens on key EU issues.

Subsequent Panels have dealt with more specific policy topics: what to do with food waste, the pros and cons of virtual worlds, the rights and opportunities to learn and study in other EU countries, and the ways to improve energy efficiency. Participants are able to communicate with each other in their own language, thanks to the help of interpreters.

As a panellist, you will be taking the baton from a long line of fellow Europeans citizens, this time

focusing on the topic of 'tackling hatred in society'. Based on your discussions, you will develop recommendations that the European Commission will take into consideration in the preparation of its policies.

HOW WILL THIS EUROPEAN CITIZENS' PANEL WORK?

Each Panel is made up of 150 randomly selected citizens from all EU Member States, who are representative of EU diversity, and of which one-third are younger than 26 years old, to ensure good discussions between generations.

The Panel combines collaborative work in small groups (of around 12 people) with plenary work (all 150 participants together). In the smaller working groups, you will have the opportunity to discuss different aspects of the topic 'tackling hatred in society' in more detail. All 150 participants will also come together in 'plenary' sessions, to share, listen and provide feedback to the inputs of the other small groups. To carry out this work, panellists will be supported by a facilitation team. This team is made up of experts in supporting group work. They will help to make the group work more dynamic, to get the best out of each individual's contribution and of the group as a whole. They will also provide citizens with a range of tools for collaborative work and collective decision-making.

You will also be supported by helpers on-site, who will provide practical information, as well as specialists on hatred and its various forms. Furthermore, you will hear testimonies and insights from representatives of civil society, institutions and academia.

¹ You can find information on the Conference on the Future of Europe here: https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/new-push-european-democracy/conference-future-europe_en

² See: <https://equineteurope.org>

³ See: <https://ceji.org> and <https://www.facingfacts.eu>



WHO ORGANISES THIS EUROPEAN CITIZENS' PANEL ?

The **European Commission** is the main organiser. The European Commission is one of the main EU institutions alongside the European Parliament and the Council. The Commission helps to share the EU's overall strategy, proposes new EU law and policies, monitors their implementation and manages the EU budget. The European Citizens' Panel on Tackling Hatred in Society is organised jointly by two departments of the European Commission: the Directorate-General for Communication, and the Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers.

The **Directorate-General for Communication ('DG-COMM')** is the Commission department responsible for communicating and explaining EU policies to outside audiences. It keeps the Commission abreast of political developments and of trends in public opinion and media. It is also promoting direct engagement with citizens through participatory and deliberative processes, including the European Citizen's Panels and the [Citizens' Engagement Platform](#).

The **Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers ('DG-JUST')** is the Commission department responsible for EU policy on justice, consumer rights and gender equality. As part of its mission, DG JUST is responsible to ensure the effective respect, promotion and protection of fundamental rights as enshrined in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. It is also the directorate that is in charge of the Commission's work on tackling hate speech and hate crimes.

THE KNOWLEDGE COMMITTEE

The Panel discussions will be guided and advised by a dedicated Knowledge Committee, who will provide you with the necessary knowledge you need to grasp the topic and develop solid recommendations. All members bring in a different and complementary expertise on the topic:

Arun MANSUKHANI

Clinical Psychologist, specialised on Psychological Trauma

Daris LEWIS RECIO

Legal and policy officer at Equinet²

Federico FALOPPA

Professor of sociolinguistic at the University of Reading

Jelena JOVANOVIC

Coordinator of the Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup at European Parliament

Manos TSAKIRIS

Professor of Psychology at the University of London

Nesrine SLAOUI

Independent Journalist and author

Robin SCLAFANI

Director of CEJI and coordinator of the Facing Facts Network³

Tommaso CHIAMPARINO

Policy officer in the Directorate General for Justice and Consumers, Fundamental Rights Policy Unit (DG JUST)

THE CITIZENS' PANEL ON TACKLING HATRED IN SOCIETY

Along with the other participants, you will meet for three sessions. Two sessions will take place in person in Brussels and one session will be online:

- **Session 1**
5-7 April 2024 (onsite in Brussels, Belgium)
- **Session 2**
26-28 April 2024 (online via a video conference tool)
- **Session 3**
17-19 May 2024 (onsite in Brussels, Belgium)

DELIBERATING ABOUT A SENSITIVE TOPIC

As organisers of the European Citizens' Panel, it is our responsibility to make the Panel a safe space that allows all panellists and invited contributors to talk freely and be heard, as long as they respect the perspectives and experiences of others. We are committed to creating a respectful environment for all. What may be perceived as 'safe' or 'acceptable' for one person might not be true for someone else with a different lived experience. Your discussions will be centred around your experiences, but also the experiences of those who have suffered and are suffering from hatred.

We will establish some ground rules and, most importantly, apply the 'no harm' principle to reduce as much as possible the chance of psychological harm to participants attending (such as causing violence and conflict, triggering trauma or mental health issues). To ensure that this principle is met and upheld, you will be guided by a professional team of facilitators throughout the sessions.

All respectful inputs will be accepted, and there should be openness to try to understand the root causes of hatred without judgement. The Panel will be oriented towards finding solutions to enable us to live more harmoniously in our societies.

2 / Remit: What will I be working on?

The European Citizens' Panel on Tackling Hatred in Society will aim to answer the following main question:

“What can we do about hate and how can we enhance mutual respect in our societies?”

Specifically, the Panel will aim to identify possible policy actions and all the relevant players to be involved at different levels, including decision-makers, civil society, the private sector and citizens. Different questions will help you navigate this topic and imagine tools and actions that could be implemented to tackle hatred in our society.

In Session 1,

which will take place in Brussels, you will develop a common understanding of hatred and the scope of the Citizens' Panel. Together with the other citizens, you will start with unpacking emotions and perceptions of hate, including by sharing with and listen to external speakers, testimonies and experts. You will identify different causes and drivers of hate as well as potential fields of action in which hatred in society can be tackled.

In Session 2,

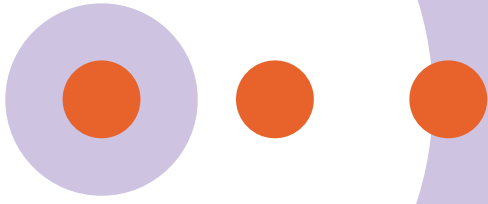
which will take place online, building up on the work of session 1, you will develop ideas on how to tackle the problem of hatred in society. These ideas can be considered as draft recommendations.

In Session 3,

which will take place in Brussels, you will refine these ideas and recommendations with the support of experienced facilitators, resource persons from civil society and content experts. Eventually, these ideas become the final recommendations on how to tackle hatred in Europe.

THE FINAL OUTCOME

of the Panel will be a list of recommendations that will support the European Commission's future work on tackling hate speech and hate crime. The recommendations will serve as a guide to help the EU and its Member States to move from hatred and division to the shared enjoyment of European values, as enshrined in the Treaty of the European Union. These include a respect for human rights and dignity, and a society where tolerance, non-discrimination and pluralism prevail.



3 / Topic:

What do I need to know about hatred?

UNDERSTANDING HATRED AND ITS FORMS

We all feel like we know what hate is, and yet, it is **not easy to define**, as manifestations of hate are multiple, diverse and complex. It can range from very subtle forms to much more explicit ones. Hate can remain an inner feeling but can also translate into violent actions (such as those incited by violent extremist ideologies). It can manifest itself in many forms: from verbal abuse or insults to bullying, harassment, disinformation portraying minorities in an incorrect and unfavourable light, threats or calls for violence, all the way to physical violence, or even murder.

The **Pyramid of Hate** offers a simplified illustration of what can be called the building blocks of hatred, from bias through to the most severe life-threatening manifestations. In a pyramid, the upper levels are supported by the lower levels. These lower levels are often unconscious, so that the individual is not aware that they are engaging in any kind of discrimination or contributing to hatred or mistrust. If people or institutions treat behaviours on the lower levels as being acceptable or 'normal', it results in the behaviours at the next level becoming more accepted.

The Pyramid of Hate reflects a **possible trajectory** towards increasingly pervasive systems of oppression that negatively impact individuals, institutions and society overall. From individual emotions and feelings to the establishment of biased attitudes and behaviours, a progression can arise towards organised and systematic discrimination, all the way to the most violent criminal acts.

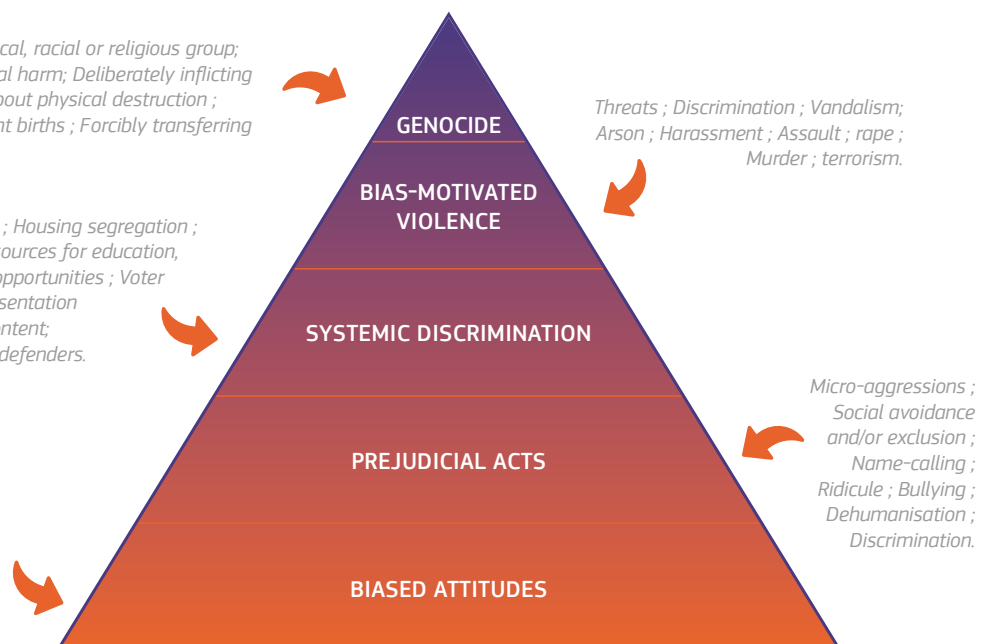
In the EU, **systemic discrimination** manifests itself in multiple forms. Enduring phenomena such as discriminatory hiring procedures, ethnic profiling by law enforcement agencies⁴, negative stereotypes perpetuated by media outlets, educational disparities, or gender pay gaps prove that discrimination remains very much a reality, and that the biases that underpin it are deeply ingrained within our society.

For those individuals who possess several characteristics that are grounds for exclusion within our social, economic and political structures (for example, gender, religion, skin colour or sexual orientation), we talk about **multiple or intersectional discrimination**. For them, the situation is particularly difficult,

With intent to destroy a national, ethnical, racial or religious group; Killing; Causing serious bodily or mental harm; Deliberately inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about physical destruction; Imposing measures intended to prevent births; Forcibly transferring children of the group to another.

Criminal justice disparities; Housing segregation; Unequal distribution of resources for education, health care, employment opportunities; Voter suppression; lack of representation in media or educational content; Silencing of human rights defenders.

Blind spots; Fear of difference; Stereotyping; Tendency to gravitate towards or away from certain types of people; Limiting oneself to information that confirms existing beliefs; Lack of awareness of one's own privileges.



⁴ See: FRA: [Stop discrimination and ethnic profiling in Europe | European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights \(europa.eu\)](https://fra.europa.eu/en/stop-discrimination-and-ethnic-profiling-in-europe)



as they experience disproportionate waves of hatred, inequalities and injustices, which reinforces the **cycle of discrimination**. Hatred can also target people that advocate for human rights, including as part of their profession.

HATRED IN THE EU: FACTS AND FIGURES

It is not easy to find exact figures about the magnitude of the phenomenon of hatred. First and foremost, **data collection is patchy** at Member State level given the different approaches to reporting and recording of hate crimes by law enforcement. It is also difficult to have a representative quantification of the amount of hate speech circulating online. The magnitude of hate is therefore likely to be **largely underestimated**. Yet, hate crime data collected at international level based on the available official statistics⁵ suggest an overall increase by 26% from 2021 to 2022. Here are some non-exhaustive yet illustrative figures available at EU level:

- Out of eight million online messages analysed in the EU, **the level of hateful toxicity has increased by 30% between January 2023 until the middle of September 2023**. The levels are higher in French, Russian, Slovak and Spanish languages.⁶
- While the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) in 2023 reported about thousands of officially registered antisemitic incidents taking place each year⁷, these numbers may be largely underestimated. According to a FRA survey of 2018 on antisemitic experiences by Jewish people, **9 out of 10 Jews consider antisemitism increased** in their country, 71% avoid carrying or displaying items that could identify them as Jewish, and 79% of incidents are not reported.⁸
- According to another FRA survey, **55% of the respondents experienced racial discrimination in the EU more than three times from 2022-2023**.⁹
- **One in three women** both in the EU and globally have experienced **physical or sexual violence at least once** in their lifetime. At least two women a week are killed in the EU by an intimate partner or a family member.¹⁰
- Harassment due to an ethnic or immigrant background was common for **one in four Muslims** living in the EU in 2017, with **nearly half suffering six or more incidents during the preceding year**.¹¹
- The FRA found evidence of **an increase in anti-Roma rhetoric across the media and social networks during the COVID-19 crisis** in at least 13 Member States (out of 15 investigated), activating old stereotypes of Roma as a threat to public health.¹²

⁵ See: <https://hatecrime.osce.org/>

⁶ See: data from the EU-funded project "European Observatory of Online Hate" <https://eoooh.eu/>

⁷ See: FRA [Antisemitism in 2022 - Overview of Antisemitic incidents recorded in the EU | European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights \(europa.eu\)](https://fra.europa.eu/en/antidiscrimination-reports/2022-01-01-2022-06-30-antisemitism)

⁸ See: FRA [Experiences and perceptions of antisemitism/Second survey on discrimination and hate crime against Jews in the EU \(europa.eu\)](https://fra.europa.eu/en/antidiscrimination-reports/2018-01-01-2018-12-31-experiences-perceptions-antisemitism)

⁹ See: FRA [Being Black in the EU – Experiences of people of African descent 2023](https://fra.europa.eu/en/antidiscrimination-reports/2023-01-01-2023-12-31-being-black-eu)

¹⁰ See: European Commission, Press Release [‘EU calls for end of violence against women’](https://ec.europa.eu/press-room/en/infographic-10000-women-killed-partners-family-members-eu) November 2023

¹¹ See: Fundamental Rights Agency, [Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey Muslims – Selected findings](https://fra.europa.eu/en/antidiscrimination-reports/2017-01-01-2017-12-31-survey-muslims), 2017

¹² See: Fundamental Rights Agency, [Coronavirus pandemic in the EU – impact on Roma and Travellers](https://fra.europa.eu/en/antidiscrimination-reports/2020-01-01-2020-12-31-coronavirus-pandemic-eu) 2020

Hate can have **profound consequences** for the victims, and impact negatively their **mental and physical health** and **social and economic well-being**. Victims of hate speech or hate crime are also often exposed to political and social exclusion, which deter them from reporting such crimes or accessing victim support services. Furthermore, those victims that do report experiences of hate often risk secondary victimisation (additional harm not as a direct result of the criminal act but due to the manner in which institutions and other individuals deal with the victim). For child victims, especially, hate speech can seriously harm their mental health, and long-term personal development, impacting their ability to lead normal, safe lives.

Crimes triggered by hatred send messages of rejection and devaluation of whole groups and communities and the persons forming these groups and communities experience fear and severe anxieties that can be **passed down through generations**, as children learn fear and mistrust from their parents' experiences. Finally, hatred has a **silencing effect** on individuals belonging to groups at risk of hate victimisation, thus hampering the right to freedom of expression.

WHAT HAS THE EU DONE SO FAR TO TACKLE THIS ISSUE? WHAT ARE LEVERAGES FOR CITIZENS?

The European Union has **enshrined values** such as respect for 'human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of person belonging to minorities' in its founding treaties. All forms of hatred and intolerance are incompatible with these fundamental rights and values. All EU institutions have been engaged in initiatives against hate. This section provides an overview of the framework for action at EU level, which comprises both regulatory and policy initiatives.

Hate-motivated crime and speech are illegal under EU law. The 2008 Framework [Decision on combating certain forms of expressions of racism and xenophobia](#) requires the criminalisation of public incitement to violence or hatred based on race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin.

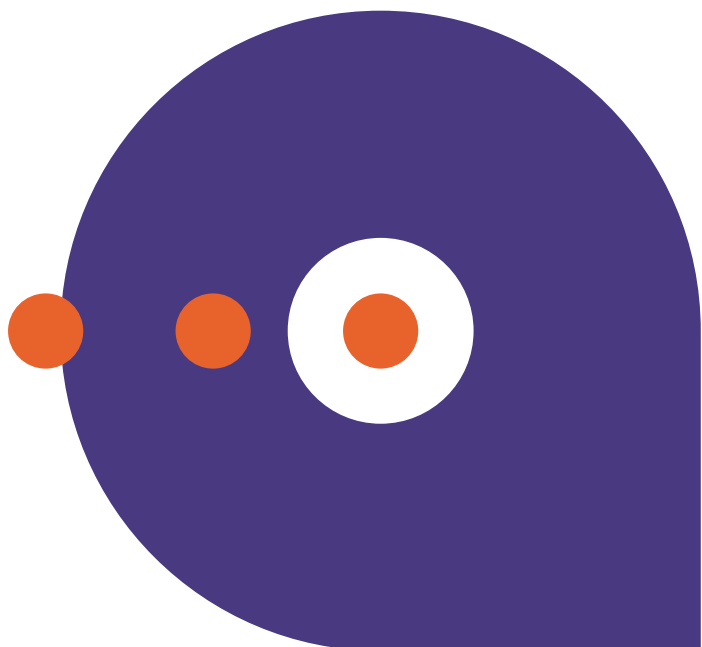
The Commission seeks to ensure that the Framework Decision is fully and correctly transposed, in particular through the launch of infringement proceedings, which in turn have led to action in eleven Member States. Yet, the Commission cannot intervene in individual instances of hate speech or hate crime. These remain a **competence of national law enforcement authorities**, who must investigate, prosecute, and try cases of alleged hate-motivated crime or speech.

On 6 December 2023, the European Commission adopted a [Communication on 'No place for hate: a Europe united against hatred'](#). It is a call for action to all Europeans to stand up against hatred and speak up for tolerance and respect. With this Communication, the Commission seeks to **increase efforts to fight hatred in all its forms**, by reinforcing action across a variety of policies, including security, digital, education, culture and sport. Specific proposals announced by the Communication include additional funding to protect places of worship, new initiatives against online threats and reinforced cooperation with civil society actors.

The European Commission is also implementing an active policy to combat hatred, including dedicated exchanges and tools in support to enforcement by national authorities. It has adopted **dedicated EU strategies** such as the [EU strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life](#), [EU Roma strategic framework on equality, inclusion and participation](#) as well as an [EU action plan against racism](#) more broadly. Strategies are **not legally binding** but include a set of actions that EU institutions, agencies and bodies, or national authorities are encouraged to undertake to address a specific issue. To give one example, the EU Strategy on combating antisemitism encourages EU institutions and Member States to take actions such as funding or work with online platforms to tackle antisemitism online, as well as measures to foster education, research about the Holocaust and on Holocaust remembrance.

In addition, to face the **challenges of online hatred**, the EU has developed a range of laws and initiatives to tackle the different threats involved in the digital sphere. In 2016, the EU initiated a voluntary Code of Conduct on countering illegal hate speech online with major social media platforms. The [Digital Services Act \(DSA\)](#) includes new obligations for online platforms to counter illegal content, including illegal hate speech.

In 2021, the [Commission also adopted a Communication](#) which calls on the Council of the European Union (another EU institution representing the Member States) to adopt at unanimity and with the consent of the European Parliament a decision that would **extend the current list of 'EU crimes'** in Article 83(1) TFEU to hate crimes and hate speech. If the Council decision were to be adopted, the European Commission would be able to propose new secondary legislation allowing the EU to criminalise other forms of hate speech and hate crime, in addition to racist or xenophobic motives.





WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES OF TALKING ABOUT HATE AND ACTING AGAINST IT?

In this section we would like to highlight, in a non-exhaustive yet illustrative manner, several issues that make the discussion about hate particularly challenging. This indicative list does not preclude additional ones that may emerge as part of the Panel discussions.

1. Talking about hate can be **sensitive** and **deeply personal**, triggering strong emotional responses and bringing back painful memories or personal experiences. An additional complication is that defining hate can be **highly subjective** despite existing legal definitions.

2. Ensuring a **balance** between **freedom of expression** and the need to sanction and **prevent hate speech** is easier said than done. Freedom of expression is a fundamental right and constitutes one of the essential foundations of a democratic society. It covers not only 'information' or 'ideas' that are regarded as inoffensive, but also those that offend, shock or disturb. However, human rights law acknowledges that freedom of expression **must not be exploited to incite hatred and violence**. In fact, it may be considered necessary in certain democratic societies to sanction or even prevent all forms of expression which spread, incite, promote or justify hatred based on intolerance, provided that any interference imposed is proportionate to the legitimate aim pursued. The boundaries between freedom of expression and hate speech are not always very clear, but the case-law of the **European Court of Human Rights** gives guidance on whether a certain expression constitutes hate speech.¹³

3. The scope of action at EU level is framed by the 2008 Framework Decision on racism and xenophobia. Since the adoption of the Framework Decision, the Treaties have changed and areas of crime where the EU can legislate are limited to a list that does not include hate speech and hate crime. For this reason, an amendment of the Treaties has been proposed and it is now pending before the Council of the European Union. Until then, it is not possible for the Commission to put forward legislation on the issue.

4. The application of the laws on criminalisation of hate speech and hate crime varies between EU countries, and unfortunately, **not all EU countries are equally safe for all communities**. What is considered a hate crime in one Member State is not always considered as such in another. This is notably the case for hate crimes on the basis of **sexual orientation**, which are not currently covered under EU law. An additional relevant EU law to be mentioned is the Victims' Rights Directive which establishes minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, including victims of hate crime and hate speech, and ensures that persons who have fallen victim to crime are recognised and treated with respect.

5. The **level of knowledge** of the biases and grounds of hatred is **uneven and quite superficial**, including among law enforcement. Useful guidance may come from existing definitions elaborated by other international organisations or the organisations representing affected communities. Yet, there are grounds of hate speech or biases where the definition is less clear or less developed.¹⁴

6. Hate crimes or hate speech are **often invisible**: they are not reported at all, or not recorded as hate crimes by the police collecting the claims of the victims. Therefore, hate speech and crime remain invisible from official statistics and recordings. Similarly, criminal justice systems sometimes **overlook evidence of bias motivation** behind a crime, which means that **hate crimes are sometimes not recognised** as such. Where there is no data available, there is perceived to be no problem, and thus no policy. Statistics and other information for each EU Member State are needed to provide a more complete and accurate picture of the situation on the ground.

¹³ See: European Court of Human Rights, [Factsheet - Hate Speech](#), 2023

¹⁴ For further information, see the Council of Europe [Recommendation on Combating Hate Speech](#), 2022

4/ Practical information

*We look forward to welcoming you to the first Panel session starting on **Friday 5 April (14h00)** in Brussels, Belgium. Please see below some practical information to prepare for your trip and your participation in the meetings. As a reminder:*

*The discussions will take place over three weekends, starting on Friday afternoon until Sunday noon. **Sessions 1 and 3 (5-7 April and 17-19 May)** will take place in person (in Brussels) and **session 2 will be online (26-28 April)***

1. EXPENSES

A compensation fee of EUR 90.00 per session and/or travel day will be provided. The compensation fees will be paid following the sessions, after participation is confirmed through an attendance list.

2. LOGISTICS

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

You have received, or will receive, your travel itinerary and e-Ticket. Should you have any further questions regarding your travel arrangements, please let us know by contacting us at info@futureu.events

TRANSFERS

Transfers upon arrival: Upon your arrival at the airport/train station, you will be welcomed by staff of the European Citizens' Panels carrying a welcome board or poster, who will accompany you to the transfer bus. If you encounter difficulties in finding the staff, please call +32 460 22 40 27.

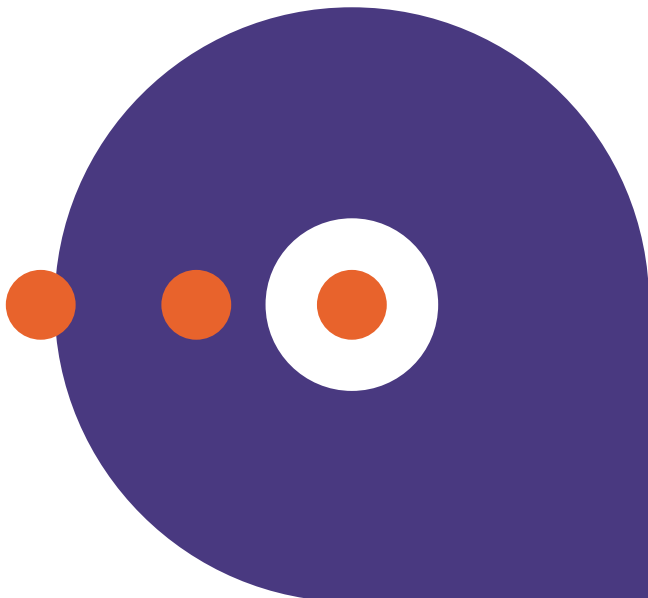
By plane: At the airport, after picking up your luggage, please make your way to the courtesy desk at the Arrivals Terminal where our staff will be waiting for you.

By train: At Brussels Midi train station, please make your way to the 'Prêt à Manger'-café where our staff will be waiting by the welcome board/poster.

At the hotel: Bus transfers will be organised from your hotel to the European Commission premises, where the sessions will take place. Please present yourself at the hotel's main hall before the scheduled time of departure. Our team will show you the way to the shuttle. If you prefer to reach the European Commission's premises on your own, please notify our support team before departing.

Once in Brussels: If social events like dinners take place after the meetings, then group transfers by a shuttle bus will be organised from the European Commission premises to the venue of the social event. Afterwards, group transfers by a shuttle bus will be arranged from the venue to your hotel. You are of course free to explore the city after the social event and make your way back to the hotel on your own.

Transfers upon departure: We will arrange the transfers from your hotel to the departure airport/train station. The departure time will be indicated on a notice board in the hotel lobby.



ACCOMMODATION

Our team will welcome you on arrival at the hotel. A single room, with breakfast and free Wi-Fi has been booked for you. Please refer to your booking confirmation sent by email. Kindly note that you will be responsible for covering the cost of all extras (e.g. minibar, room service, telephone, hotel bar, laundry service, early check-in or late check-out etc.) and will not be covered by the organisers. Please settle all extra expenses directly at the hotel before your departure.

3. MISCELLANEOUS

• Dress code

Please bring smart-casual clothes for the sessions, a warm jacket and a scarf and a waterproof winter coat as well as warm comfortable shoes and an umbrella. Temperatures will probably be around 11°C and slightly higher in May but do come prepared for the changeable Belgian weather!

• Drinking water

Tap water is safe to drink in Belgium. Bottled water or filtered water will be available and free during all sessions, meals and social events.

• Time zone

Current Time is CET - Central European Time (UTC/GMT +1 hour and UTC+2 as from 31 March).

• Tourism Information

Brussels has a rich history, architecture, gastronomy, culture and more! Feel free to consult the Brussels-Capital Region website to discover all the cultural activities on offer during your stay.

• Contact

Our team will be available before and during the sessions. If you encounter any difficulties upon arrival, or if your flight details have changed, please contact us via e-mail: info@futureu.events

• Interpretation

The sessions will be available in the 24 official languages of the EU thanks to a team of professional interpreters. To help them, please speak clearly and avoid speaking too fast during your session.

4. ACCESS TO THE BUILDING

The first and last panel weekend will take place on the premises of the European Commission in Brussels. Please refer to the agenda for more information on the exact buildings and rooms. The European Commission building is accessible with a visitor's pass ('V-pass'). A 'V-pass' will be sent to you via e-mail before the event. Please don't forget to register via this e-mail to finalise the process and get your V-pass QR code. If you have not received your V-pass before the event, please contact us via e-mail: info@futureu.events

Please note that it may take at least 20 minutes to complete the security check on arrival at the European Commission building. Please have your V-pass, ID card or passport ready as security personnel will ask to see them.

All participants:

- are required to show a valid passport or ID card before entering the building;
- are required to undergo security controls at the entrance area;
- are advised to carry the invitation letter or any other document clearly indicating their participation (e.g. registration mail)

5. HELPDESK, INTERNET ACCESS

A helpdesk will be located at the entrance of the sessions' rooms. Our staff will assist you and respond to any questions you may have. Internet can be accessed via Wi-Fi hotspots. The passwords will be shared on the day of the meeting.

6. ACCESSIBILITY

The premises of the European Commission are fully accessible for people with disabilities. When registering online, please indicate any special needs and dietary requirements.



