



## *What is hate speech?*

Hate speech aims to bully, despise, promote hatred, jeopardise the physical integrity or incite discrimination against a group of people or a member of that group because of his/her *age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, nationality, language, descent, social status, religion, beliefs or views.*



### Hate speech takes the following forms:

- distributing, manufacturing, purchasing, shipping, transporting, keeping things in order to express hatred;  
*e.g. posters, t-shirts with prints, etc.*
- verbally and publicly expressing hate speech;  
*e.g. writing comments on the internet (news portals, social networks), expressing hate speech live, writing songs, drawing graffiti, etc.*

### Opinion or hate speech?

A person has the right to have his/her convictions and to express them freely. Freedom to express convictions and disseminate information is incompatible with criminal acts – incitement to national, racial, religious or social hatred, violence and discrimination, slander and

### disinformation (**Article 25 of the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania**).

The aim of the hate speech is to humiliate, offend a particular national, racial or other group of people or its members, i.e. to show the actual or alleged vulnerability, inferiority, and limitations of a group of people or a particular member of it, so therefore statements made to offend, humiliate, dehumanize persons of the social group, etc. are incompatible with freedom of speech and are prohibited and punished according to the law.

### Liability

Liability for hate speech is regulated by the Criminal Code of the Republic of Lithuania. For the dissemination of hate speech a person can be punished by a fine or restriction of liberty, or arrest, or imprisonment for up to three years.

Criminal liability for this criminal offense may apply to a person over the age of 16, as well as to legal persons.

If hate speech is being spread by the minor (under the age of 16), the minor's parents may be subjected to administrative liability for the non-use of parental authority.

**You faced a hate speech incident. What should you do?**

- Note it – save the comment and source of where you spot the hate speech;
- Send (the comment, post and source) to The European Foundation of Human Rights (EFHR) by e-mail ([teise@efhr.eu](mailto:teise@efhr.eu)) and our lawyers will prepare a professional statement to the police

*or*

- You can contact police directly (submitting a statement or via e-platform [www.epolicija.lt](http://www.epolicija.lt));
- If you encountered hate speech across the news portals or social networks, you can notify the administrator about the post by clicking on the report button and the comment will be deleted.



**VŠĮ EUROPOS ŽMOGAUS TEISIŲ FONDAS**  
(European Foundation of Human Rights)

**J. Dobkevičiaus str. 6, Vilnius LT-02189**

tel. **+(370) 691 50 822**

e-mail: **efhr@efhr.eu**

internetcalls: **EFHR**

skype: **EFHR-LT**

**www.efhr.eu**

**Office hours:**

Monday-Thursday: **8:30 am – 5:00 pm**

Friday: **8:30 am – 4:00 pm**