Derechos fundamentales
Diritti fondamentali
Grundrechte
Direitos fundamentais
Pamattiesības
Pagrindinės teisės
Drepturile fundamentale
Temeljne pravice
Základné práva
Prawa podstawowe
Temeljna prava
Perusoikeudet
Grondrechten
Fundamental rights
Drittijiet fundamental
Основни права
Cearta bunúsacha
Alapvető jogok
Droits fondamentaux
Colloquium
Θεμελιώδη δικαιώματα
Põhiõigused
Grundläggande rättigheter
Grundlæggende rettigheder
Základní práva

- DISCUSSION NOTE -

Session II.a: Tackling hate speech in a connected world

At the centre of this session is the worrisome increase of antisemitic and anti-Muslim hate speech online. The session will discuss freedom of expression in a democratic society and limits thereto, the role of the media, the challenges and opportunities posed by the nature of the internet and the need and feasibility of counter-narratives. Given the increasing importance of social media platforms, this session will engage with IT companies' current policies, as well as the challenges posed by different legal systems' regulation of speech online. It will also examine online anonymity, the question of liability of internet service providers and the added value of developing a EU level dialogue to identify solutions.

Considering the important technological, legal and political developments over the past years, the Commission announced, in its Digital Single Market Strategy in May this year, its intention to analyse the need for new measures to tackle illegal content on the internet. This includes a reflection as to whether the adoption of EU-level rules regulating the removal of content or the disabling of access to information, also known as 'notice and take down procedures', is necessary and desirable to bring coherence to the patch-work of national laws and practices. Keeping in mind the key principles on which Europe's democratic, free societies are founded, the panel will also reflect on the role of the media, the importance of media literacy in stimulating inclusive narratives, avoiding stereotypes and prejudices and promoting diversity.

Indicative questions to steer the discussions:

1 – Do the principles enunciated by European and national courts and legislation clearly draw the line between protected speech and speech which may be sanctioned in a democratic society?

2 – Beyond monitoring the transposition and implementation of EU legislation, to what extent should incitement to racial violence and hatred, the threat of violent extremism and terrorism require further regulatory actions? Do these threats require further coordination actions? Are Member States' current actions sufficient?

3 – What have been the main threats to freedom of expression in this context? Are national authorities striking the right balance between guaranteeing freedom of expression and addressing racist hate speech?

4 – Are self-regulatory responses adopted by industry sufficient or desirable?

5 – How would counter-narratives be effective and best received by youngsters and the population at large? Should these be bottom-up initiatives or is there a need for public authorities to intervene?

6 – In what way can the media contribute to promote tolerance and other EU values as well as to counter bigotry and stereotypes?