




Hate and Propaganda Media and Narratives in Kosovo





Hate and propaganda influences in media landscape of Kosovo


 The media system in Kosovo, built upon the media as a national identity builder, conflict reporting and substantial international intervention with funding for professionalization of journalists, leaves little room for the presence of hate speech in professional media.

 Most of the controversial content in social media is not textual but is in video format instead, without the possibility of being automatically identified as hate or propaganda.


 With democratization of communication where users' commentaries on news and media productions are possible, there is an increasing trend of hate speech and propaganda in social media.


 Social media users share and comment on offensive and hateful content from real and anonymous sources.


 Most of the propaganda in social media originates from political organizations and content related to either government or opposition parties' actions. Political rivalry is orchestrated and manifested on social media.


 In the comments section of posts in Facebook groups, hate messages are directed towards subjects of content by referring to ethnic identity and sexual orientation. There is very little administration of comments in such groups.


Hate narratives and disinformation in online media and communication


 Until recently, Kosovo had no anti-migration narratives in media outlets or on social media, but with the more recent migration resulting from conflicts in the Middle East, especially from Syria, and the groups of migrants reaching Kosovo, these narratives have been enhanced.


 In cases of gender-based violence, the media covers such events with language that leans towards blaming women for the violence used against them. Similar language that justifies and celebrates violence is also used to trigger anti-women narratives on social media where women are represented with inappropriate and hateful language.

 Hate speech used against various marginalized communities in the country, from women and the LGBT+ community to ethnic minorities, does not seem to be as explicit as hate narratives targeting journalists.

 Hate commentary directed at the political opposition is vast and appears throughout all social media. The hate narratives used against political opponents are often created by people in power or those who claim to have power. By such narratives, the opposition tends to be delegitimized.

 Hate narratives against journalists mainly serve the agenda of political parties and are an organized way of promoting anti-journalistic narratives on social media. The cases of these narratives inspire violence against journalists, creating unsafe environment for their work.

 Derogatory language and hate speech are very present in political institutions and transmitted to social media comments. Support and approval for anti-women narratives are very much inspired by the political elite.

 When journalists are women, hate comments intensify and become more far-reaching.



These are findings of the research on hate and propaganda models of media and communication and findings of the research on hate narratives in Kosovo conducted in 2020 within the project "Resilience – Civil society action to reaffirm media freedom and counter disinformation and hateful propaganda in the Western Balkans and Turkey" in seven countries – Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey.