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The general aim of the project is to prevent homophobic cyber-bullying among young people: a form of bullying that takes place over digital devices and platforms like mobile phones, computers, social media and tablets perpetrated against LGBTQI youth (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intrasexual).

The **main object** will be reached through the attainment of the following specific objectives:

- Promotion of a respectful language used through digital devices and platforms referred to LGBTQI;
- Spreading a respectful and appropriate language against LGBTQI, particularly in the use of internet and social media;
- Creating a permanent network of youth association and Youth Workers to promote prevention and raise awareness on the theme of the homophobic cyber-bulling.

Specifically, the proposal virtual activities involve youth workers giving them the opportunity to develop a virtual exchange project with other colleagues from different countries.

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D3.1. Collection of Most Frequently Used Disrespectful or Hate Speech-Inciting Words

Project: Free to Be **Project Reference:** 101081200 **Funded by:** European Commission **Coordinated by:** GAYCS (Italy)

Description

As part of the "Free to Be" project, funded by the European Commission and coordinated by GAYCS (Italy), a local activity was conducted to collect words and phrases frequently used to incite hatred or show disrespect towards LGBTQIA+ individuals. This activity was carried out by various organizations, with GAYCS and SOS Europa overseeing the process in Italy. The collected terms were compiled into a PDF document, which are going to be presented at an online workshop aimed at developing a sensitisation campaign strategy.

Results from Italy

The following are some of the responses collected by GAYCS and SOS Europa during the local activity in Italy. These terms represent a range of disrespectful and hate speech-inciting words and phrases commonly directed at LGBTQIA+ individuals (see Annex I):

- "Ti ci vorrebbe di fare il militare, vedi come ti aggiustavano."
 Translation: "You should do military service, you'd see how they'd fix you."
 Analysis: This phrase suggests that military discipline would correct or change LGBTQIA+ behavior, implying that such identities are disorders that need fixing.
- "Ai miei tempi queste cose non esistevano: lo smalto alle unghie, ma dove s'è mai visto!!!"

Translation: "In my day, these things didn't exist: nail polish, where have you ever seen that!!!"

Analysis: The speaker dismisses current expressions of gender identity and non-conformity as modern aberrations, reflecting a nostalgia for a past where such expressions were suppressed or invisible.





• "Se si vogliono baciare, si baciassero a casa loro, no davanti a me."

Translation: "If they want to kiss, they should do it at home, not in front of me."

Analysis: This statement relegates LGBTQIA+ affection to private spaces, denying their right to public expression and visibility, and reinforcing the notion that such behavior is shameful.

 "Con questi lui/lei/loro/u/a ma dove andremo a finire, ci stanno rovinando pure la nostra lingua." Translation: "With all this he/she/they stuff, where will we end up, they are even ruining our language."

Analysis: This comment highlights resistance to evolving language norms that include nonbinary and gender-neutral pronouns, suggesting that such changes are corrupting traditional language and societal values.

 "Si vabbe, mo ognuno si sente quello che gli pare, allora io oggi mi sento un tostapane." Translation: "Yeah right, now everyone feels like whatever they want, so today I feel like a toaster."

Analysis: This mocking statement trivialises gender identity and self-identification, equating serious personal identities with absurdity and nonsensical claims.

• "Ah saresti una donna? Cosa hai in mezzo alle gambe?"

Translation: "*Oh, so you would be a woman? What do you have between your legs?*" **Analysis**: This crude remark reduces gender identity to genitalia, disregarding the complexities of gender and invalidating the lived experiences of transgender individuals.

- "Ma bruci@teli tutti nei fOrni."
 - **Translation**: "Burn them all in the ovens."

Analysis: This extremely violent and hateful statement evokes Holocaust imagery, advocating for the extermination of LGBTQIA+ individuals. It represents a severe form of hate speech that incites violence and dehumanises the target group.

- "Se sei nato uomo, comportati da uomo."
 - **Translation**: "If you were born a man, act like a man."

Analysis: This phrase enforces rigid gender roles and denies individuals the freedom to express their gender identity, reinforcing harmful stereotypes about masculinity and femininity.





• "Siete contro natura."

Translation: "You are against nature."

Analysis: This statement delegitimises LGBTQIA+ identities by framing them as unnatural or abnormal, often rooted in pseudoscientific or moralistic beliefs.

• "Qua in Italia è diventata una cosa normale che due fr*ci si baciano per strada!!!"

Translation: "Here in Italy it has become normal for two f*gs to kiss on the street!!!"

Analysis: The use of derogatory slurs combined with the complaint about public displays of affection reflects deep-seated homophobia and discomfort with LGBTQIA+ visibility.

• "Non fare la checca con me. Io sono etero."

Translation: "Don't act like a queer with me. I am straight."

Analysis: This phrase not only uses a derogatory term for gay men but also asserts heterosexuality as a superior or preferred norm, marginalising non-heterosexual orientations.

• "Fr*cio di merda."

Translation: "F*ggot piece of shit."

Analysis: This highly offensive insult combines a derogatory term for gay men with a general expression of contempt and hatred, dehumanising the individual it targets.

• "Sei solo confuso."

Translation: "You are just confused."

Analysis: This phrase invalidates LGBTQIA+ identities by attributing them to confusion rather than genuine self-knowledge, undermining the legitimacy of these identities.

• "I gay sono malati."

Translation: "Gays are sick."

Analysis: This statement pathologies homosexuality, suggesting it is a disease or illness, a perspective rooted in outdated and debunked medical theories.

The collection of these terms highlights the pervasive nature of disrespectful and hate speechinciting language directed at LGBTQIA+ individuals in Italy. This documentation will serve as a crucial resource for the upcoming workshop focused on developing a sensitisation campaign strategy. By understanding the specific language used to incite hatred, the project aims to create effective measures to counteract such behavior and promote a more inclusive and respectful society.





This concludes the report on the local activity conducted by GAYCS and SOS Europa for the "Free to Be" project.

Annex I

K Responses		<	Resp	sponses			
Se sei nato uomo, comportati da uomo	Siete contro natura	Ti ci vorrebk il militare, ve ti aggiustava	edi come ano	Ai miei tempi queste cose non esistevano: lo smalto alle unghie, ma dove s'è mai visto!!!			
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періу	періу /						
Non fare la checca con me. lo sono etero	Frocio di merda	Si vabbe, mo sente quello o pare, allora io sento un tost	che gli o oggi mi	Ah saresti una donna? Cosa hai in mezzo alle gambe?			
Reply >	Reply >	Reply	>	Reply >			
Sei solo confuso		Se mio figlio fr0ci0, lo rad a suon di ma	Idrizzerei	Ma bruci@teli tutti nei f0rni			
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Project: Free to Be Project Reference: 101081200 Funded by: European Commission Coordinated by: GAYCS (Italy) Beneficiary: Yellow (Kosovo)

Hate speech against the LGBTQIA+ community is a serious issue that undermines the dignity and safety of individuals based on their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. It manifests in various forms, including verbal abuse, slurs, threats, and derogatory comments, both online and offline.

Hate speech refers to any form of communication—whether spoken, written, or behavioural—that belittles or discriminates against individuals or groups based on attributes such as race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or other characteristics. It includes offensive remarks, slurs, and expressions of hatred or intolerance, and can incite violence, hostility, or discrimination.

On February 17, Kosovo celebrated its sixties birthday. Yet, nearly two decades after the formal cessation of hostilities, victims of oppression remain in Kosovo. Among them is the country's LGBTQI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex) community.

On paper, Kosovo's human rights legislation and rule-of-law provisions are far above its neighbours. After all, the foundations for those laws were laid by seconded officials from the countries that had backed the breakaway nation in its war against Belgrade and subsequently administered the territory before it declared independence.

Freedom from discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation has been enshrined in the constitution since June 2008. And yet, the number of LGBTQI Kosovars that are willing to publicly identify themselves as such could be counted on two hands. Closeted or not, all those who spoke to Equal Times gave chilling testimony of what it means to be young and gay in Europe's youngest country.

Online hate speech are extremely modest compared to what LGBTQIA+ people face. But the bullying of LGBTQIA+ people who are vocal in various media spaces is seen as normal, both in daily life and online. Apart from some LGBT advocacy groups, there is hardly any civic mobilisation to address gender and sexuality-based hatred. With a few rare exceptions, LGBTQIA+ people are still insulted, humiliated and excluded by their families, institutions and the broader





society. They are targeted with physical and emotional violence and do not have proper access to health services.

Such conversations, when planned carefully rather than in an ad-hoc way, not only demystify the issue of same-sex marriage and the LGBTQIA+ community but also provide greater protection for the community. This is especially necessary as online violence, in the form of hate speech and other forms, has become a common mode of communication and is most harshly exercised against outspoken women and LGBTQIA+ people.

Some of the words in the contest for Hate Speech in Kosovo:

1. In August, a graffiti was painted in Prishtina saying "kill the gays". The graffiti was reported to the police. Activists replaced the word "kill" with "kiss".

2. A reality TV show's characters made stigmatising statements about LGBTI people in January. Artist, Ermira Murati, also known as Orange Girl, received several death threats for her painting featuring a kiss between the leaders of Kosovo and Serbia.

- 3. 'pedera' (an offensive term for gays) are common in portals.
- 4. 'dylber' (an offensive term for gays) are common in portals.
- 5. 'gejuc' (an offensive term for gays) are common in portals.
- 6. 'qefli' (an offensive term for gays) are common in portals.
- 7. '*lezbejk*' (an offensive term for girls/women) are common in portals.

7. calling them "degenerates that bring sickness", defending the idea that only opposite sex marriage should be allowed, and arguing that any other partnership outside of this combination is to be considered as debauchery and moral degeneration.

These terms, among others, can be used to demean, insult, or marginalize LGBTQIA+ individuals. The context in which they are used often determines the level of offensiveness, but generally, they contribute to a hostile and unsafe environment for LGBTQIA+ people.





Research Report: Hate Speech Against the LGBTQIA+ Community in North Macedonia

Project: Free to BeProject Reference: 101081200Funded by: European CommissionCoordinated by: GAYCS (Italy)Beneficiary: PEL (North Macedonia)

Hate speech is generally considered to be any form of expression that incites discrimination, hostility, or violence against a person or group based on their race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity, language, or political affiliation. Hate speech can manifest in various forms, including derogatory slurs, offensive jokes, threats, stereotypes, or... It can escalate to spreading fear, inciting violence, and fostering discrimination and hostility.

Context in North Macedonia

Even though throughout the years the situation has improved, there are still a lot of things to be done in order to eliminate the hate speech targeting the LGBTQIA+ community in North Macedonia, as it is still widely spread. It still poses a significant threat to the safety, dignity and human rights of these individuals. They are still verbally attacked based on their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. Most of them still live inside the closet and have difficulties with being themselves due to this hate speech they are facing. Hate speech against the LGBTQIA+ individuals and the community in general happens both online and offline and it includes derogatory comments, verbal abuse and even threats.

The legal framework in North Macedonia offers some protection against discrimination based on sexual orientation, as reflected in the 2010 Anti-Discrimination Law, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in areas such as employment and public services. However, gender identity is still not fully recognized in the law, leaving transgender individuals particularly vulnerable. As stated in Radio Slobodna Evropa, according to the latest EU research, as many as 73 percent of gay people in out country hide their sexual orientation at work, 27 percent have reported experiencing workplace discrimination, and violence against them is also on the rise. It's also stated that 18 percent of LGBTQIA+ people in North Macedonia surveyed by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights have had suicidal thoughts almost always or very often, while 27 percent responded that they have occasionally considered suicide. From this we can see that despite the legal protections, hate speech remains a widespread problem. Actions need to be taken immediately if we want to improve the situation for this community and help them to better integrate into the society.

Online Hate Speech

Unfortunately, in the past years the internet has become a prominent platform for spreading hate speech against LGBTQ+ people in our country. We are witnesses of host derogatory comments and





memes targeting the LGBTQIA+ community on social media platforms and online news portals. Having the opportunity to post comments anonymously allows even more individuals to spread hate speech online without being held accountable and augmenting this problem. Even though many organizations have made efforts to address hate speech, their impact is still very limited as a result of the lack of support from other institutions and organizations. Helsinki Committee for Human Rights and LGBTQIA+ United Tetovo, as organizations supporting LGBTQIA+ community have organised many campaigns against hate speech, but they face significant challenges in the process of mobilising support from the wider public and influencing policy changes in our country.

Offline Hate Speech

Hate speech towards LGBTQIA+ community doesn't happen only online. Unfortunately, they are victims of hate speech in everyday life too. Those who speak openly about their sexual orientation and gender identity are victims of verbal abuse, threats and social exclusion. Even the pride parade and other cultural activities organised by this community have been met with counter-protests and hate speech from others. On the other hand, we have to keep in mind that religion and cultural conservatism still play a huge role in supporting hate speech. The church often promotes traditional views of family and gender and that all contributes to the marginalisation of LGBTQIA+ people.

Forms of Hate Speech in North Macedonia

- 1. **Graffiti and Vandalism:** It often appears in the form of graffiti in public spaces. Messages like "Death to gays" or "Faggots out" have been reported in various cities, particularly around events such as pride parades or LGBTQIA+ gatherings.
- 2. **Media Commentary:** Public figures, including politicians and religious leaders, have made derogatory comments about LGBTQIA+ people. For instance, during debates over same-sex marriage or anti-discrimination laws, hate speech often emerges in the form of moral condemnation and fear-mongering about the "threat" of LGBTQIA+ rights to traditional family values.
- 3. **Hostility at Public Events:** LGBTQIA+ cultural events, have been disrupted by hate speech, including insults and calls for violence. Participants at pride parades have also reported being targeted with verbal abuse from bystanders.

Common Offensive Terms Used Against LGBTQ+ People in North Macedonia Similar to other countries in the Balkans, North Macedonia has a range of derogatory terms used to demean and insult LGBTQIA+ individuals. Some of the most common offensive words include:

- 1. **"Peder"**: A derogatory term used to refer to gay men. This term is one of the most frequently used slurs and is often accompanied by verbal abuse or threats of violence.
- 2. "Lezbejka": A derogatory term used to refer to lesbians. It is commonly used in online forums and public discussions to demean women who are open about their sexual orientation.
- 3. **"Bolestni"**: Meaning "sick" or "diseased," this term is used to suggest that LGBTQIA+ people suffer from a mental or physical illness, reinforcing harmful stereotypes.

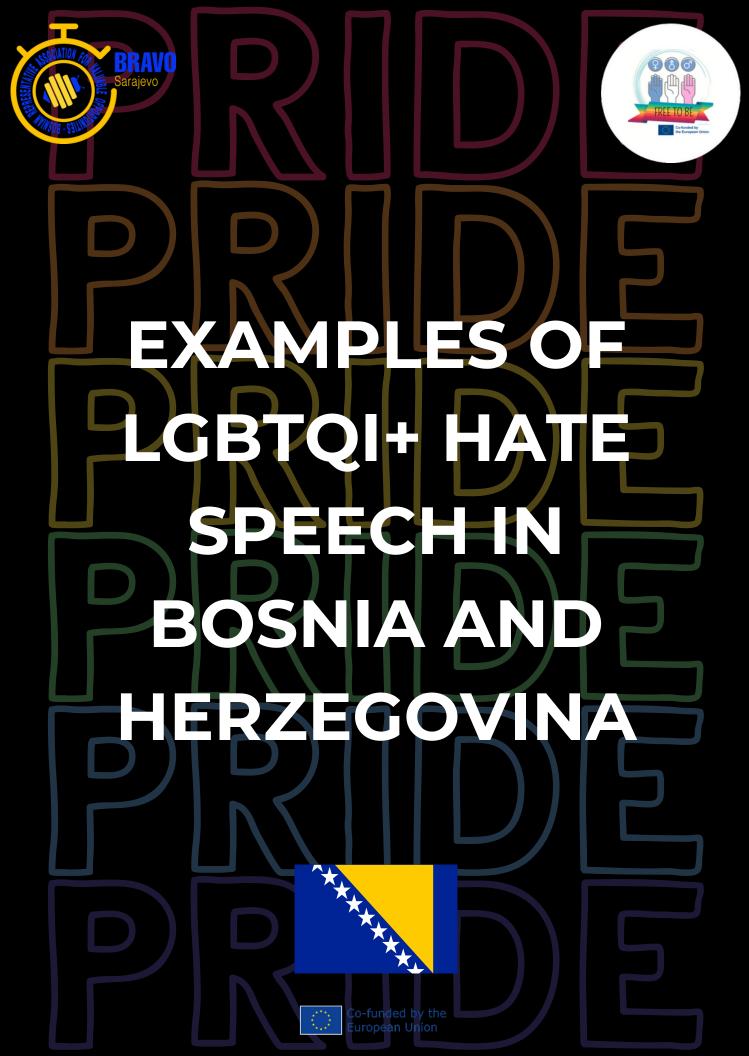




- 4. **"Freak"**: A derogatory term used to describe transgender individuals or anyone who does not conform to traditional gender norms. It is commonly used in both online and offline settings to alienate and stigmatise.
- 5. **"Sramota za familija"**: Meaning "shame to the family," this phrase is often used in public and private conversations to ostracise LGBTQIA+ people, suggesting that their identities bring dishonour to their families.
- 6. **"Nenormalni":** Translated as "abnormal," this term is used to dehumanise LGBTQIA+ individuals by framing them as outside the norms of society.

Conclusion

Hate speech against LGBTQIA+ individuals in North Macedonia continues to be a significant barrier towards equality and safety. Despite the legal protections and the efforts of the NGOs to raise awareness about the issue and help them integrate more easily into the society, they still face discrimination and hate speech both online and offline. In order to improve the current situation it is very important that civic organizations, policymakers and the public in general promote tolerance and support the LGBTQIA+ individuals. We are all part of the problem but also part of the solution, so with joint effort, public education and awareness campaigns we can help stop the hate speech and create a more inclusive society in our country.



1. "Pederi" - an offensive term for gays



"At the Goethe-Institut in Bosnia and Herzegovina, BH Pride Month was opened with the exhibition "Congratulations, shame on you!" which showcases hateful and violent messages received by the Pride Organizing Committee over the past five years, highlighting the homophobic challenges LGBTIQ+ individuals face. Despite ongoing threats, vandalism, and violence, we call on authorities and the public to condemn these actions and join us in upcoming events, culminating in the fifth BH Pride Parade on June 22." <u>Source</u>

2. **"Radim u salonu, muškarci ne žele dolaziti zbog mene, u lice mi kažu: 'Ja ne želim dolaziti zato što si peder." -** "I work in a salon, men don't want to come because of me, they say to my face: 'I don't want to come because you're gay."



"A married gay couple from Bosnia and Herzegovina shares their story of love, challenges, and faith. Despite societal pressures and threats, they remain devout Muslims and continue to fight for acceptance and equality, demonstrating the intersection of their faith and identity." <u>Source</u>

3. **"hodajući sifilis, bolesnici, poremećeni, da se trebaju liječiti, spodobe" -** "walking syphilis, the sick, the deranged, that they should be treated, the likes"



"The article discusses the growing threats and hate speech faced by the LGBTIQ community in Bosnia and Herzegovina ahead of the fifth Pride March. Despite Facebook's removal of some hateful comments, many remain visible, which causes concern as past similar incidents led to physical violence. Legal and institutional gaps make it difficult for authorities to address online hate speech, leaving the community vulnerable, especially during public events." <u>Source</u> 4. **"ali i prijeteći, da ih treba "pobiti", "nabiti na kolac", te im "baciti bombu"** - "but also threatening, that they should be "killed", "impaled", and "throw a bomb"



"The article discusses the growing threats and hate speech faced by the LGBTIQ community in Bosnia and Herzegovina ahead of the fifth Pride March. Despite Facebook's removal of some hateful comments, many remain visible, which causes concern as past similar incidents led to physical violence. Legal and institutional gaps make it difficult for authorities to address online hate speech, leaving the community vulnerable, especially during public events." <u>Source</u>

5. "dalje od djece" - "away from children"



"The article discusses how social media is increasingly used as a tool for political propaganda, especially during election periods. It highlights how political actors exploit platforms like Facebook and Twitter to manipulate public opinion through fake accounts, disinformation, and hate speech, often targeting opponents and marginalized groups. The article also sheds light on the role of party-affiliated "bots" in spreading coordinated propaganda." <u>Source</u>

6. "dno dna! fuj u sta se Sarajevo petvara. Nismo daleko od Sudnjega dana, svi predznaci su se ispunili." - "the bottom of the bottom! Phew, what is Sarajevo getting into? We are not far from Judgment Day, all the omens have been fulfilled."



"The article highlights the upcoming fifth Bosnian Pride Parade, emphasizing the slogan "Love to not be afraid" and the role of art in addressing societal violence faced by the LGBTIQ+ community. It details how artistic works, such as posters showing couples before a kiss, symbolize the fight against repression and fear in public expressions of love. Despite the efforts to foster change, the community continues to face daily violence, as evidenced by the destruction of Pride posters and hate messages in Sarajevo." <u>Source</u>

7. "parada srama" - "parade of shame"



"The exhibition "Congratulations, Shame on You!" was proudly opened by @BHpovorkaponosa. It showcases actual insults, threats, and hateful comments directed at LGBTIQ people, presented as personal messages, posts, and comments. The exhibition aims to highlight the ongoing discrimination and hostility faced by the community." <u>Source</u>

8. **"Nakazo", "Imamo bolesnih i bez njih", "Bacaj, Putine", "Treba sve lezbe i pedere pobit", samo su neki od komentara koje posjetitelj izložbe "mora" doživjeti prolazeći izložbom..." -** "Freak", "We have sick people even without them", "Throw it away, Putin", "We need to kill all lesbians and fags", are just some of the comments that visitors to the exhibition "must" experience while passing through the exhibition..."



"The article discusses the challenges and threats faced by the LGBTIQ+ community in Bosnia and Herzegovina, particularly in the lead-up to the fifth Sarajevo Pride Parade. It highlights the exhibition "Congratulations, Shame on You!" which showcases real threats and hate speech directed at the community. Despite progress in visibility and support, the community still encounters significant hostility, with activists calling for legal reforms to protect their rights." <u>Source</u>







Research Report: Hate Speech Against the LGBTQIA+ Community in

Montenegro

Project: Free to BeProject Reference: 101081200Funded by: European CommissionCoordinated by: GAYCS (Italy)Beneficiary: Mladinfo (Montenegro)

Homophobia in Montenegro has always been a big issue, online and offline. However, throughout the years physical attacks on people have lowered, but it still continues online. After doing some research on homophobic comments in the digital space, we can see some similarities between comments, not just what is written but also their intent.

The examples below were reactions to some situations regarding the LGBTQIA+ community, such as a man being proposed to by another man (reactions to that event and to a woman who supported them), a popular trans psychologist (mostly comments under youtube videos of different interviews) and other posts with similar comments, mainly on Twitter and YouTube.

Below we will list some examples and their translations, as well as explanations for some of them. After that we will attach screenshots of the collected comments from the internet.

- "Bolest" (illness) Referring to the LGBTQIA+ community as sick, usually trying to say they have mental problems.
- "Adam i Eva a ne Adam i Steva" (It's Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve) This phrase is used a lot when someone wants to point out that being a homosexual isn't in people's nature.
- Attacks on personality without knowing the person
- "Stoko" (cattle) Usually used to undermine someone, to offend them by portraying them as less human.
- "Pih" Used to show disgust.
- "Pe*erčine" (fa*gots) Used as an offense to homosexual men.
- "Dabogda se od side raspali" (I hope you get sick from AIDS) This is just one of the examples in which people "threaten" the LGBTQI+ community by saying they hope bad things would happen to them. Another used phrase is "od raka se raspadali", which is basically wishing they fall apart from cancer.
- "Da ti je tata bio takav, ne bi se sad kenjala po tviteru" (If your dad was like that /meaning gay/, you wouldn't be complaining on Twitter right now) This comment is used a lot in different forms but with the same intention, which is wishing that person was never born, or trying to in that way prove that being a homosexual isn't "normal" because of reproduction.





- Cursing This is used in all forms and ways, mentioning fathers, mothers, alive or dead, as well as the previously mentioned phrases, and using them in different curses. The intention is to offend the subject and to show anger and disapprovement.
- "Zabraniti ružnim ženam da iznose mišljenje javno" (Ban ugly women from expressing their opinion in public) Attacks on physical appearance when disagreeing with opinions. This is especially directed towards women.
- "Kamenčuga iz raja izašla" (Big stones come from heaven) These kinds of comments approve and sometimes encourage physical violence against the LGBTQI+ community. Another similar example would be "Bozeeee baci ciglu i budi precizan..nije bolest sve sto boli", meaning "God throw a brick...not every illness hurts", which is pointing out that it's a mental illness and also supports physical violence.

Examples:

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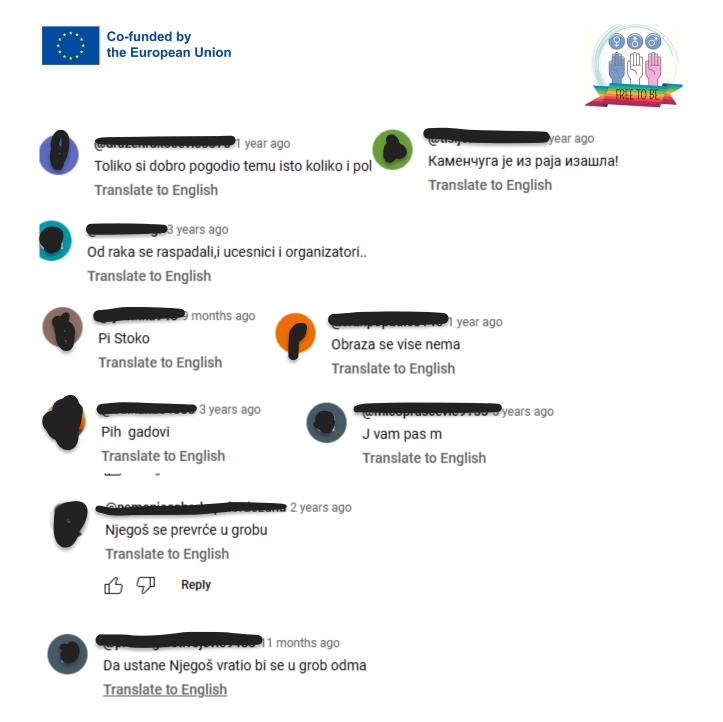


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Report on Collection of Most Frequently Used Disrespectful or Hate Speech-Inciting Words in Albania

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Albania, a country with a rich cultural history, is gradually moving toward greater inclusivity and respect for human rights. However, LGBTQIA+ individuals still face significant challenges in terms of acceptance, protection, and inclusion in society. Disrespectful language and hate speech targeting the LGBTQIA+ community remain prevalent, particularly in more conservative regions and online platforms. This report aims to document some of the most frequently used disrespectful or hate speech-inciting words aimed at LGBTQIA+ individuals in Albania, offering insight into the types of language that continue to fuel discrimination and hostility.

This report is based on a combination of social media monitoring, interviews with LGBTQIA+ individuals, and a review of existing literature on hate speech in Albania. The language documented here reflects both everyday slang and more severe forms of hate speech, offering a snapshot of the challenges LGBTQIA+ individuals face in the country.

1. Types of Disrespectful and Hate Speech-Inciting Words

Hate speech targeting LGBTQIA+ individuals in Albania can be broadly categorised into terms that target sexual orientation, gender identity, and the general demonisation of non-heteronormative identities. The words and phrases listed below range from casual slurs to more severe insults that incite violence or discrimination.

1.1 Disrespectful Terms Targeting Gay Men

Gay men in Albania often face the brunt of verbal harassment and discrimination, both in public and online. These terms are rooted in outdated stereotypes that associate homosexuality with immorality, deviance, or weakness.

- "Pederast": One of the most commonly used derogatory terms for gay men, "pederast" carries connotations of perversion and sexual deviance. The term is often used to shame and stigmatise gay men, particularly in conservative circles. Unfortunately, its usage extends beyond mere insult, as it often contributes to a hostile environment for LGBTQIA+ individuals in Albania.
- "Homo": A colloquial insult used to mock gay men, "homo" is often thrown around casually in conversations or arguments. It is used to degrade someone's masculinity and imply that they are weak or unworthy of respect.





• "Gej i fëlliqur" ("Dirty gay"): This phrase adds a layer of moral judgment, suggesting that being gay is inherently dirty or impure. It is often used in more extreme forms of hate speech, particularly in social media comment sections or in heated debates.

1.2 Disrespectful Terms Targeting Lesbians

Lesbians in Albania also face derogatory language that seeks to invalidate their sexual orientation or reduce their relationships to something abnormal or inferior.

- "Lesbike": A derogatory term for lesbian women, often used to dismiss or belittle their sexual orientation. It is frequently employed in a mocking tone, aiming to undermine lesbian relationships by suggesting they are not legitimate or serious.
- "Djaloshkë" ("Tomboy"): While "djaloshkë" can sometimes be used in a neutral or descriptive way, it is often used pejoratively to describe lesbian women or women who do not conform to traditional gender roles. The term carries the implication that women who reject femininity are somehow lesser or abnormal.

1.3 Transphobic and Gender Identity-Based Hate Speech

Transgender and non-binary individuals are particularly vulnerable to hate speech in Albania. Transphobic language often seeks to invalidate their gender identity, reduce their experiences to something "unnatural," or ridicule them for not conforming to binary gender norms.

- "Transvestit": Used as a slur against transgender individuals, particularly trans women, this term is intended to mock or delegitimise their gender identity. The word carries connotations of inauthenticity, implying that the individual is merely pretending to be a gender different from the one they were assigned at birth.
- "Burrneshë": Originally used to describe women in some northern Albanian communities who live as men, this term can sometimes be co-opted to mock or stigmatise transgender men. It is often used in a derogatory way to suggest that trans men are "just women pretending to be men."
- "Gjarpër" ("Snake"): This metaphorical insult is used to describe transgender individuals, particularly in online spaces, and is meant to suggest that they are deceptive or inherently untrustworthy because of their gender identity.

1.4 General Anti-LGBTQIA+ Hate Speech

In addition to slurs that target specific identities, there are general insults and expressions of disdain toward the LGBTQIA+ community as a whole. These words and phrases often reflect the broader societal attitudes that see non-heteronormative identities as morally wrong or dangerous to the fabric of society.

• "Të sëmurë" ("Sick people"): This phrase is commonly used to describe LGBTQIA+ individuals, suggesting that their sexual orientation or gender identity is a form of illness or





mental disorder. The implication is that being LGBTQIA+ is something that needs to be "cured" or "fixed."

- "Degradim i shoqërisë" ("Society's degradation"): This phrase is often used by more conservative or religious groups to argue that the visibility and acceptance of LGBTQIA+ individuals are signs of moral decay. It portrays LGBTQIA+ people as a threat to traditional values and norms.
- "Antinjerëzorë" ("Inhuman"): This extreme term is used to dehumanise LGBTQIA+ individuals, implying that their identities or behaviours are unnatural or outside the bounds of what is considered human. Such language can incite hatred and even violence, as it removes the basic humanity of LGBTQIA+ people in the eyes of those using it.

2. Efforts to Combat Hate Speech in Albania

Despite the challenges, there have been efforts within Albania to combat hate speech and promote the rights of LGBTQIA+ individuals. Various non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are working to raise awareness about the impact of discriminatory language, provide support for victims of hate speech, and push for stronger legal protections.

- Education Campaigns: NGOs are actively working to educate the public about the harmful effects of hate speech on LGBTQIA+ individuals. These campaigns often focus on breaking down stereotypes and promoting the idea that everyone, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, deserves respect and dignity.
- Legal Protections: Albania has made progress in establishing legal protections for LGBTQIA+ individuals, although enforcement remains a challenge. The country's anti-discrimination law, passed in 2010, includes protections against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. However, more needs to be done to ensure that these laws are upheld, particularly in cases of hate speech and hate crimes.
- **Community Support:** LGBTQIA+ organizations in Albania provide safe spaces for individuals to share their experiences, seek support, and build a sense of community. These groups play a crucial role in helping LGBTQIA+ individuals navigate a society where hate speech is still prevalent.

Hate speech targeting LGBTQIA+ individuals in Albania remains a significant barrier to achieving full equality and acceptance. The disrespectful and discriminatory language documented in this report reflects deeper societal prejudices that continue to marginalise LGBTQIA+ people. While progress is being made, there is still much work to be done to challenge these harmful attitudes and create a more inclusive society.





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