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Action Plan for the reduction of racism and anti-Semitism for 2023

Riga, 2023

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List of the used abbreviations

ME	Ministry of Economics
MES	Ministry of Education and Science
MC	Ministry of Culture
LCHR	Association “Latvian Centre for Human Rights”
MW	Ministry of Welfare
UL	University of Latvia
SEA	State Employment Agency
NGO	Non-governmental organizations
SIF	Society Integration Foundation
ombudsman	Ombudsman’s Office
MH	Ministry of Health

I. Summary of the Action Plan for the reduction of racism and anti-Semitism for 2023

The Action Plan to reduce racism and anti-Semitism in 2023 (hereinafter “the Plan”) is drawn up in accordance with 18 September 2020 Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions “A Union of equality: EU anti-racism action plan 2020-2025” (COM (2020) 565 final) (hereafter “Communication No. 565”)¹ and 5 October 2021 Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions “EU Strategy on Combating Antisemitism and Fostering Jewish Life (2021-2030)” (COM (2021) 615 final) (hereinafter “Communication No. 615”)² (hereinafter both together “European Commission’s Communications”).

Communication No. 565 calls on Member States to adopt national action plans against racism by the end of 2022. National action plans should include measures to reinforce anti-racism actions, help to listen to people representing minorities in the context of racial or ethnic origin, and bring together members at different levels in joint efforts to tackle racism more effectively and build a life free of racism and discrimination.

Communication No. 615 calls on Member States to develop national strategies to combat anti-Semitism by the end of 2022 or to include appropriate measures in their national anti-racism action plans and to ensure sufficient funding for their implementation. Communication No. 615 aims to build a future free from anti-Semitism in the European Union and elsewhere, as well as to reinforce measures to actively prevent and combat all its manifestations, as well as to ensure that Jews can continue to enjoy their living environment in an inclusive and diverse European Union.

The measures included in the Plan are structured taking into consideration following recommendations:

1. Communication No. 565 contains the following lines of action:
 - 1) Racism at the individual level – preventing harm to that can be caused to people and society:
 - a) tackle racism and racial discrimination through legislation: review and action (Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial

¹ 18 September 2020 Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions “A Union of equality : EU anti-racism action plan 2020-2025 (COM (2020) 565 final). Available: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM%3A2020%3A0565%3AFIN>

² 5 October 2021 Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions “EU Strategy on Combating Antisemitism and Fostering Jewish Life (2021-2030)” (COM (2021) 615 final). Available: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52021DC0615>

- or ethnic origin³ and equality bodies; Council of Europe Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions⁴ of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law and other legal instruments in the fight against racism;
- b) measures outside European Union laws: do more to tackle racism in everyday life (tackling discrimination by law enforcement authorities; security and safety; risks associated with new technologies; employment, education, health and housing);
- 2) Structural racism – addressing the underlying problem:
 - a) policies for change (tackling stereotypes and raising awareness of history; the right data for an informed policy choice);
 - b) implementing system: Making full use of European Union tools (activities at local, regional, national and international level; an integrated approach; the use of European Union funds; combating racism and discrimination in foreign policy);
 - c) positive action by the European Union: listening and action (inclusive democracy; new structures to listen and learn: a permanent system of opinion exchange).
2. The common basic principles for national action plans against racism and racial discrimination (hereinafter “the Common Basic Principles”) prepared at national level by the European Commission Subgroup for the implementation of the European Union action plan against racism 2020-2025 set out the following basic principles:
 - 1) to recognise and promote diversity, justice and equality;
 - 2) to ensure that the legal and political framework of the European Union and other obligations arising from international obligations are fully transposed and implemented at national level;
 - 3) to identify and address possible manifestations of structural racism and their impact;
 - 4) to set specific and achievable goals in the national action plans;
 - 5) to define measures to combat racism through a holistic approach and ensuring their coordination and implementation in national, regional and local level policies;
 - 6) to ensure that involvement, active participation and transparency are fundamental principles of the national action plan, as well as to ensure that the public is informed about the preparation and implementation of the national action plan;

³ Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin. Available: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32000L0043>

⁴ Council of Europe Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law. Available: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32008F0913>

- 7) to use data on equality and hate crime to ensure evidence-based policy making;
 - 8) to ensure proper monitoring and/or evaluation of the implementation of the national action plan.⁵
3. Communication No. 615 contains the following lines of action:
- 1) to prevent and tackle all forms of anti-Semitism:
 - a) to fight against anti-Semitism in all policy areas and to raise the European Union funding;
 - b) to fight against anti-Semitic hate speech and hate crime;
 - c) to fight against anti-Semitism online;
 - d) to fight against anti-Semitic discrimination;
 - 2) to protect and support the Jewish living environment:
 - a) to counter violent extremism and terrorism against Jews;
 - b) support for Jewish living environment and freedom of religion or belief;
 - c) protection of Jewish heritage;
 - 3) education, research and Holocaust remembrance:
 - a) education and research on anti-Semitism and Jewish life;
 - b) education, research and remembrance of Holocaust;
 - c) denial, distortion and trivialisation of the Holocaust;
 - 4) leading the global fight against anti-Semitism:
 - a) the use of all tools to combat anti-Semitism in the framework of the European Union's external action;
 - b) protection of Jewish cultural heritage and remembrance of the Holocaust.

In accordance with the protocol of the meeting of State Secretaries of 2 December 2021 (protocol No. 40, 3§) “Informative report “On the accountability of the “Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions about the EU strategy to combat anti-Semitism and support Jewish communities (2021 -2030)””” 2nd paragraph of the Ministry of Culture has been determined as the responsible institution, but the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Education and Science as co-responsible institutions of the implementation of Communication No. 615. In accordance with the inter-institutional agreement on determining the responsible institution and co-responsible institutions for the development of the Latvian national anti-racism action plan achieved in the national information system for work with European Union documents “ESVIS”, the Ministry of Culture has been designated as the responsible institution, while the Ministry of

⁵ European Commission, Subgroup on the National implementation of the EU anti-racism action plan 2020-2025. *Common guiding principles for national action plans against racism and racial discrimination*. Available: https://www.antiracism-eusummit2022.eu/media/42zfloqy/scic_just_anti-racism-summit_napar-report_v05.pdf

Economics, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Welfare, the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Health are co-responsible for the preparation of the Latvian national action plan against racism.

Taking into consideration in Communication No. 615 included reference that Member States may include measures to combat anti-Semitism in their national anti-racism action plans, the Plan has been drawn up as a single policy planning document.

The Plan does not include measures to reduce anti-Gypsyism and discrimination against Roma people. They are included in the Plan for Implementing Measures of the Roma Strategic Framework 2022-2023⁶.

The working group was established by Order No. 2.5-1-51 of the Ministry of Culture of 19 April 2022 on “Establishing a working group to develop Action Plan for the reduction of racism and anti-Semitism for 2023”, which includes the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Economy, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Welfare, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Health, the Council of Higher Education, the State Education Quality Service, the Agency for International Youth Programmes, the Ombudsman’s Office of the Republic of Latvia, representatives of the State Employment Agency, the Society Integration Foundation, Latvian School of Public Administration, the National Centre for Education, the State Police, association “The Latvian Centre for Human Rights”, the Latvian Association of Local Governments, association “The Latvian Council of Jewish Communities”, the Society “Shelter “Safe House””, the Museum “Jews in Latvia”, The Lipke Memorial Museum, and the Riga and Latvian Jewish religious congregation “Shamir”.

On 26 October 2022, a public discussion of the Plan was launched on the Single Portal for Development and Harmonisation of Draft Legal Acts. By the end of the deadline for public discussion – 25 November 2022, seven proposals from private individuals were received. On the merits, they do not affect the measures included in the Plan – one proposal calling for attention to be paid to informing the public about significant events in the history of Latvia has been addressed in the plan for the development of a cohesive and civically active society 2022-2023⁷ (hereinafter “SPASAP”), while six proposals focus on general public confidence and tolerance and the measures set out in the Plan will contribute to this. As a result, all proposals made on the Plan during the public discussion have been taken into account.

The implementation of the Plan's measures is closely linked to the

⁶ Plan for Implementing Measures of the Roma Strategic Framework 2022-2023. Approved by Cabinet Regulations No. 310 of 3 May 2022 (Protocol No. 25, § 26). Available: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/332093-par-planu-romu-strategiska-ietvara-pasakumu-istenosanai-2022-2023-gadam>

⁷ Plan for the development of a cohesive and civically active society 2022 -2023. Approved by Cabinet Regulations No. 32 of 18 January 2021 (Protocol No. 3 31.§). Available: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/329302-par-saliedetas-un-pilsoniski-aktivas-sabiedribas-attistibas-planu-2022-2023-gadam>

achievement of the goals and objectives set out in the National Development Plan 2021-2027⁸ (hereinafter NAP2027).⁹ At the same time, the Plan's measures are coherent with the following policy planning documents: Plan for the development of a cohesive and civically active society guidelines 2021-2027¹⁰ and SPASAP, the Plan for the Implementation of the Measures of the Roma Strategic Framework 2022 -2023.

The measures, that are outlined in the Plan, have also been implemented in 2022, which is not reflected in the following chapters of the Plan, given the process of preparation and coordination of the Plan. Information on the measures implemented in 2022 and the funding used for their implementation in 2022 is available in the annex to the Plan.

II. The goal of the Plan

The goal of the Plan is to contribute to reducing the manifestations of racism and anti-Semitism by implementing the measures set out in the Plan, in line with the recommendations according to the European Commission's Communications and taking into account the resources available in the country.

III. Description of the Situation

Intolerance towards people of a different race, nationality or religion is not just a local problem, it is a global problem. Although universal human rights principles were already included in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948¹¹, the manifestations of racism and anti-Semitism are also very common today.

This issue is also regularly raised by international organisations with a mandate to promote tolerance and prevent discrimination. At national level, the promotion of tolerance and the prevention of discrimination fall within the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman. In accordance with Article 11 (1) and (2) of the Law on the Ombudsman, the functions of the Ombudsman are to promote the protection of the human rights of the individual, as well as to promote respect for the principle of equal treatment and the elimination of any form of discrimination. In exercising these functions, the Ombudsman participates in the drafting of

⁸ Latvian National Development Plan 2021-2027 (NAP2027). Approved by the decision of the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia in 2 July 2020. Available:

https://www.pkc.gov.lv/sites/default/files/inline-files/NAP2027_apstiprin%C4%81ts%20Saeim%C4%81.pdf

⁹ In the same place. Task 408 of the NAP2027 action strand "Resulting the public's understanding of diversity as a means of strengthening intergroup and intercultural communication skills and communication intensity, diversity management and reducing discrimination".

¹⁰ Plan for the development of a cohesive and civically active society guidelines 2021 -2027. Approved by Cabinet Regulations No. 72 of 5 February 2021 (Protocol No. 12 24.§). Available: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/320841-par-saliedetas-un-pilsoniski-aktivas-sabiedribas-attistibas-pamatnostadnem-2021-2027-gadam>

¹¹ Article 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: "Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status."

legislation, initiates and examines inspection cases, making recommendations. The Ombudsman is also actively involved in the education of the public, including providing education about anti-discrimination issues. According to Safege Baltija LTD, Comperio LTD and Prospero LTD, commissioned research by the Society Integration Foundation “Exploratory report on the current level of public awareness and awareness and the most effective mechanisms for providing information”, it is possible to determine the level of society’s tolerance by asking three questions that are closely related to the everyday life of every person. That is: who wouldn't you rather (1) live next door to, (2) work in the same team with, and (3) have a family with. By analysing the level of tolerance of the Latvian residents, the study concludes that only one in five Latvian residents has a high level of tolerance: only about 20% of Latvians say that they would have no problems living next door to, working together or being close friends with representatives of social groups at risk of discrimination.¹² A public opinion poll commissioned by the Centre for Public Policy PROVIDUS in 2020 confirms the results of studies carried out in the past: Muslims, Roma, gays, lesbians and transgender people, people with mental disabilities, as well as people from South Asia (e.g. India, Pakistan) are most often exposed to intolerance.¹³

Stereotypes and prejudices tend to develop into wider racist attitudes, judging a group as inferior or less valuable and legitimate. Hate crime and discrimination are the ultimate forms of intolerance.¹⁴ In Latvia, hate crime mainly takes the form of hate speech, offensive comments and publications on the internet, i.e. the use of an automated data processing system to carry out acts aimed at inciting national, ethnic, racial, religious or social hatred or hatred.¹⁵ In practice, identifying hate speech involves assessing the content of the hateful comment, which can vary considerably.¹⁶ Tackling hate speech on the internet is linked to various challenges, such as the lack of a formal and clear definition of hate speech; the diversity of languages in which content is published; the diversity of content forms, from comments to entire websites that purposely spread hate speech; and the separation of responsibilities between internet platforms and its users.¹⁷

¹² Safege Baltija Ltd., Comperio Ltd., and Prospero Ltd. (2017). *A research report on the current level of public awareness and information and the most effective mechanisms for providing information*. Riga, p. 4. Available: <https://www.sif.gov.lv/lv/media/1236/download>

¹³ The research centre SKDS (2020). *A survey of Latvian residents*. Riga, p. 3. Available: http://providus.lv/article_files/3841/original/Tabulas_integracija_112020_.pdf?1614347941

¹⁴ Association “Latvian Centre For Human Rights” (2017). *Say NO to hate speech*. A handbook for teachers on talking to students about the issues of intolerance and hate speech. Riga, pp. 7-8. Available: https://cilvektiesibas.org.lv/media/attachments/13/11/2017/saki_ne_naida_runai_buklets_13_11_m94K6bF.pdf

¹⁵ Kamenska A., Treļš Ē. (2017). *Hate crime: practice and issues. National report – Latvia*. Riga, p. 59. Available: https://cilvektiesibas.org.lv/media/attachments/01/03/2018/LV_brosura_internetam.pdf

¹⁶ Treļš Ē. (2016). *Characteristics of textual legal expertise in cases of incitement of hatred*. Socrates: Riga Stradiņš University, Faculty of Law, electronic journal of legal scientific articles, No. 1 (4), pp. 46-56. Available: https://dspace.rsu.lv/jspui/bitstream/123456789/987/1/16-091_Socrates_4_2016_05_Treļš_046-056_.pdf

¹⁷ Kamenska, A., Tumule, J. (2022). *Tackling hate speech on the internet: Role of the European Commission and Trusted Rapporteurs*. “Jurista vārds”, 2022 /NO. 25/26 (1239/1240). Available: https://juristavards.lv/doc/281533-cina-ar-naida-runu-interneta-eiropas-komisijas-un-uzticamo-zinotaju-loma/?fbclid=IwAR0CYhydIrm-uRPh_n0LYR2eMYpGY24U95bsNyclTjXPIdwJE5IC_gZZTwY

The effectiveness of law enforcement in hate crime cases depends on the willingness of victims and others to report these crimes. However, people from different vulnerable groups often do not recognise hate crimes and are not aware that the offence could be punishable. People may also be unaware that statements directed at them because of their identity could be considered as hate speech, which is punishable. For example, the vast majority of international students who have experienced intolerance, that is 86%, have not reported it anywhere, including half of those who have experienced physical violence. Most people do not consider these incidents (especially verbal abuse) to be serious enough to report it. Some do not trust the police (9%), some do not believe that reporting will make a difference (8%), and some are used to such incidents (8%).¹⁸

Since 2016, the European Union Code of Conduct on countering illegal hate speech online has been in force in the territory of the European Union.¹⁹ In the monitoring organised by the European Commission, which examines the response of social networks to complaints about hate speech, 940 reports on hostile content have been submitted from Latvia. On average, social networks have deleted 68.5% of the reported content.²⁰

The LCC monitors hate speech by participating in the European Commission's monitoring, as well as in the framework of various projects. Over the last five years, the LCC has reported more than 2000 cases of hate speech both on global social networks and on the websites of Latvian news portals. According to LCC monitoring data, hate speech in Latvia is most prevalent on ethnic basis, including against Jews, Latvians, Russians and Roma (31%), migrants (including refugees (28%) and on the basis of skin colour/race (10%).²¹

In 2020 and 2021, the Ombudsman has identified many more cases of hate speech against people of different skin colour and ethnic origin. These were mostly anonymous comments and social media posts. Trends in hate speech are influenced by current events. During the migration crisis, hate speech against migrants and people with different skin colours increased rapidly on the border of the Republic of Latvia and the Republic of Belarus. In 2022, there was a much bigger outbreak of hate speech in the context of the war in Ukraine. Since the invasion of the Russian Federation in Ukraine, hate speech on an ethnic basis has increased.

¹⁸ Association "Latvian Centre for Human Rights" (2016). Survey of foreign students/immigrants on their experience of intolerance in Latvia. Summary of the results. Riga, pp. 46-56. Available: <https://cilvektiesibas.org.lv/media/attachments/10/05/2017/studentuaptaujaLV2016.pdf>

¹⁹ *The EU Code of conduct on countering illegal hate speech online*. Available: https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/racism-and-xenophobia/eu-code-conduct-countering-illegal-hate-speech-online_en#:~:text=Related%20links-.%E2%80%8BThe%20EU%20Code%20of%20Conduct.countering%20illegal%20hate%20speech%20online%E2%80%9D

²⁰ European Commission (2021). *Countering illegal hate speech online. 6th evaluation of the Code of conduct*. p.3. Available: https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/factsheet-6th-monitoring-round-of-the-code-of-conduct-october2021_en_1.pdf

²¹ Kamenska, A., Tumule, J. (2022). *Tackling hate speech on the internet: Role of the European Commission and Trusted Rapporteurs*. "Jurista vārds", 2022 /NO. 25/26 (1239/1240). Available: https://juristavards.lv/doc/281533-cina-ar-naida-runu-interneta-eiropas-komisijas-un-uzticamo-zinotaju-loma/?fbclid=IwAR0CYhydIrm-uRPh_n0LYR2eMYpGY24U95bsNyclTjXPIdwJE5IC_gZZTwY

According to the Ombudsman's observations, hate speech is still a relatively hidden problem in Latvian society. That is, the relevance of hate speech has not been sufficiently addressed at the political level. It can be observed that individuals are more likely to identify such statements in public and the number of complaints is gradually increasing. However, the activism of those who have been harassed in reporting cases of hate speech should be promoted. The Ombudsman participates in various conferences, discussions and provides information to the public on the Ombudsman's Office website. Lawyers from the Ombudsman's Office visit educational institutions to discuss with young people tolerance, the fight against racism, antisemitism and hate speech.

Prejudice exists in society and people are not always ready to accept people of a different race or nationality in their environment. The Ombudsman's Office has identified cases from NGO reports and people's statements when, for example, they refuse to rent an apartment for people with different skin colour.

Preventing discrimination of any kind, including racial discrimination, requires intensive work with and education of the public. It is best to start it from an early age. These issues are included in national education standards²² and guidelines²³ for educating students.

It is almost impossible to tackle racism and anti-Semitism with a few occasional public education campaigns. It should be a continuous and coordinated set of activities over several years, with specific objectives to be achieved.

According to Article 14²⁴ of Directive 2000/31/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 8 June 2000 on certain legal aspects of information society services, in particular electronic commerce, in the Internal Market (Directive on electronic commerce), Article 10²⁵ of the Law on Information Society Services, Internet intermediaries such as Facebook, Snapchat, Google and others are obliged to delete or render inaccessible to users information which is considered illegal when that intermediary becomes aware of that illegality. Meaning that Internet portals are obliged to remove hate speech from the Internet if it occurs. On 16 June 2015, the European Court of Human Rights ruled in case

²² Cabinet Regulations No. 747, Adopted 27 November 2018, "Regulations Regarding the State Basic Education Standard and Model Basic Education Programmes". Available: <https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/303768-regulations-regarding-the-state-basic-education-standard-and-model-basic-education-programmes>;

Cabinet Regulation No. 416, Adopted 3 September 2019, "Regulations Regarding the State General Secondary Education Standard and Model General Secondary Education Programmes". Available: <https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/309597-regulations-regarding-the-state-general-secondary-education-standard-and-model-general-secondary-education-programmes>

²³ Cabinet Regulation No. 480, Adopted 15 July 2016, "Guidelines for the Upbringing of Educatees and the Procedures for the Evaluation of Information, Teaching Aids, Materials, and Study and Upbringing Methods". Available: <https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/283735-guidelines-for-the-upbringing-of-educatees-and-the-procedures-for-the-evaluation-of-information-teaching-aids-materials-and-study-and-upbringing-methods>

²⁴ Directive 12000/31/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 8 June 2000 on certain legal aspects of information society services, in particular electronic commerce, in the Internal Market (Directive on electronic commerce). Available: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32000L0031>

²⁵ Law on Information Society Services. Available: <https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/96619-law-on-information-society-services>

Delfi v. Estonia, in which it recognised that the Internet news portal was responsible for abusive and defamatory user comments.²⁶

In 2016, the Ombudsman carried out research “Problems of recognition and investigation of hate speech and hate crimes in the Republic of Latvia.”²⁷ The research concludes that more attention should be paid to the identification, qualification and investigation of hate speech and hate crimes. While proving a hate motive is very difficult in practice, it is unacceptable that such crimes remain uninvestigated due to lack of practice and experience.

The “Guidelines for the Identification and Investigation of Hate Crimes” drawn up by the State Police in 2017 state that the term “hate crime” is not included in the Latvian regulatory framework. The term “hate crime” is generally understood to include offences under Articles 71 (Genocide), 71.¹ (Incitement to genocide), 78 (Incitement to national, ethnic and racial hatred), 149.¹ (Violation of the prohibition of discrimination), 150 (Incitement to social hatred and intolerance) and any other criminal offence committed on the basis of racist, national, ethnic or religious motives (Article 48 (1)(14) of the Criminal Law).^{28,29,30}

1. Situation in the scope of reducing racism

As stated in Communication No. 565 and expressed by the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions “A Union of equality: EU anti-racism action plan 2020-2025, the term “racism” should be understood as “belief that a reason such as “race”, colour, language, religion, nationality or national or ethnic origin justifies disrespect for a person or group of persons or the notion of superiority of a person or group of persons”.^{31,32}

²⁶ Judgment of the European Court of Human Rights of 16 June 2015 in *Delfi v Estonia* [https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#{%22appno%22:\[%2264569/09%22\]}](https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#{%22appno%22:[%2264569/09%22]})

²⁷ Ambrasa I. (2016). Problems of recognition and investigation of hate speech and hate crimes in the Republic of Latvia.

Available: https://www.tiesibsargs.lv/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/naida_noziegumu_un_naida_runas_izmeklesana_lv_2016_1496214733.pdf

²⁸ State police (2017). *Guidelines for the Identification and Investigation of Hate Crimes*. Riga, p. 3. Available: <https://www.vp.gov.lv/lv/vadlinijas-naida-noziegumu-identifikacijai-un-noversanai>

²⁹ The compilation of case-law “Hate speech and freedom of speech. Case law in criminal cases under Articles 71.¹, 78, 150 of the Criminal Law. October 2012-May 2018” is indicated that out of 25 criminal cases examined, 24 have been held criminally liable pursuant under Article 78(2) of the Criminal Law for acts aimed at inciting national, ethnic, racial or religious hatred or intolerance by means of an automated data processing system. The compilation points out that the comments were directed against various ethnic and religious groups: 10 - Jews, 8 - Latvians, 3 - Russians, 1 - Roma, 1 - Muslims, 1 - blacks. During the period covered by the compilation, 23 individuals were found guilty of an offence under Article 78 (2) of the Criminal Law.

³⁰ Statistical indicators of hate speech (criminal offences) in the Republic of Latvia (period from 01.01.2011 to 30.04.2021): For an offence under Article 74.¹ of the Criminal Law, a total of 4 criminal proceedings were brought to court; For an offence under Article 78 of the Criminal Law, a total of 40 criminal proceedings were brought to court or concluded with a prosecution order; For an offence under Article 150 of the Criminal Law, a total of 4 criminal proceedings were brought to court or concluded with a prosecution order.

³¹ Communication from the European Commission in 18 September 2020 that was made to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions “A Union of Equality: EU Action Plan against Racism 2020 -2025” (COM (2020) 565 final). Available: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/LV/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0565&from=EN>

Although discrimination based on racial or ethnic origin³³ is prohibited in the EU, it still exists. Racism harms society in many ways: it affects human dignity, their life opportunities, their prosperity and their well-being, and often also their personal safety.³⁴

Discrimination between different ethnic groups is difficult to tackle and it can be caused by various factors. Research on the subject distinguishes between unconditional discrimination based on dislike of migrants and statistical discrimination based on specific beliefs related to people from different ethnic groups.³⁵ According to the results of a survey of the Latvian residents conducted by the research centre SKDS in November 2020, 86% of Latvian residents have not experienced discrimination in the last year. Only 4% of respondents said they had experienced discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, and 3% on the basis of nationality.³⁶

According to a survey of foreign students carried out by the LCC, 68% of respondents had experienced various forms of intolerance, including hate speech, hate crime and discrimination. 33% of respondents said they had been victims themselves and 36% said they had witnessed or heard about such cases from others. The main reasons for the harassment were – skin colour or race (36%), ethnic origin (25%), language (22%), religion (6%).³⁷

In 2018, the Council of Europe's Consultative Committee on the Implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities recommended Latvia to ensure stronger, faster and more effective action by public authorities to prevent, investigate and prosecute racially or xenophobically motivated offences and to ensure continuous monitoring of this phenomenon in society. The Consultative Committee urged the public authorities to tackle stereotypes and prejudice in political discourse and to promote tolerance and intercultural dialogue in society as a whole. In particular, the immediate

³² The Plan has been developed in accordance with Communication No. 565. But taking into consideration the Communication from the European Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions of 12 November 2020 entitled 'A Union of Equality: LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025' (COM (2020) 698 final). (Available: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0698>), the Plan does not include information on discrimination and intolerance against members of the LGBTIQ community.

³³ Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic, Article 2. Available: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32000L0043>

³⁴ Communication from the European Commission in 18 September 2020 that was made to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions "A Union of Equality: EU Action Plan against Racism 2020 -2025" (COM (2020) 565 final). Available: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0565>

³⁵ Boarini R., Causa O., Fleurbaey M., Grimalda G., Woolard I. (2018). Reducing inequalities and strengthening social cohesion through inclusive growth: a roadmap for action. *Economics: The Open-Access, Open-Assessment E-Journal*, 12 (2018-63), pp.15-16. Available: http://www.economics-ejournal.org/dataset/PDFs/journalarticles_2018-63.pdf

³⁶ The research centre SKDS (2020). *A survey of Latvian residents*. Riga, p. 5. Available: http://providus.lv/article_files/3842/original/Tabulas_integracija_112020_.pdf?1614348752

³⁷ Association "Latvian Centre For Human Rights" (2016). *Survey of foreign students/immigrants on their experience of intolerance in Latvia*. Available: <http://cilvektiesibas.org.lv/media/attachments/10/05/2017/studentuaptaujaLV2016.pdf>

implementation of specific and targeted measures, such as information campaigns, including in the media, to counteract xenophobic manifestations in society.³⁸

In 2018, the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination published its observations on the sixth to twelfth periodic review of Latvia. In this document they made a number of recommendations for Latvia. It was recommended to increase funding for the Ombudsman's Office to enable it to work more effectively on issues of racism and discrimination. It is recommended that Latvia incorporates the concept of racial discrimination into its legal framework, in accordance with Article 1 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. It also recommends reviewing the norms for tackling racist and hate speech and improving the fight against hate speech on the Internet.³⁹

In accordance with the information compiled by the Court Administration, in the period from 1 January 2017 to September 2022, ten proceedings under Article 78 of the Criminal Law – Incitement to National, Ethnic and Racial Hatred have been completed in Latvian courts, and 8 persons have been convicted.⁴⁰

According to the information gathered by the State Security Service, 32 criminal proceedings under Article 78 of the Criminal Code have been initiated between 2018 and 1 September 2022.⁴¹ According to Article 387 (2) of the Criminal Procedure Law, officials authorised by the State Security Service investigate criminal offences committed in the area of state security or in state security institutions, or other criminal offences within their competence and in cases where the Prosecutor General has ordered the investigation. The materials of the criminal proceedings did not reveal any threat to national security that would fall within the jurisdiction of the State Security Service, and there was no information that the actions or persons identified in the criminal proceedings constituted a threat to national security. The criminal proceedings were therefore referred to the State Police for investigation.

Following the Russian Federation's invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022, the State Police has detected various types of criminal offences and violations of law in Latvia, for which a total of 125 criminal proceedings and 290 administrative violation proceedings have been initiated between 24 February 2022 and 24 August 2022, and 173 departmental inspections are active. Most of the recorded offences are still related to military aggression and the public display of

³⁸ *Fourth Report on the Implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by the Republic of Latvia* (2021). Riga, p. 25. Available: <https://rm.coe.int/4th-sr-latvia-en/1680a46422>

³⁹ Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (2018). *Concluding observations on the combined sixth to twelfth periodic reports of Latvia*. p. 3. Available: https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CERD/Shared%20Documents/LVA/CERD_C_LVA_CO_6-12_32235_E.pdf

⁴⁰ In 2017, one legal proceeding was initiated, one person acquitted; in 2018, two legal proceedings were initiated, two persons convicted; in 2019, two legal proceedings were initiated, one person acquitted, one person convicted; in 2020, two legal proceedings were initiated, two persons convicted; in 2021, one legal proceeding was initiated, one person convicted; in 2022 (until September), two legal proceedings were initiated, two persons convicted.

⁴¹ 4 criminal proceedings in 2018; 6 criminal proceedings in 2019; 4 criminal proceedings in 2020; 4 criminal proceedings in 2021; 14 criminal proceedings in 2022 (until 1 September).

symbols that are glorifying totalitarian regimes, and the police continue to regularly record cases of theft or damage to Ukrainian flags.

From 2017 to 2021, with the support of the Riga City Municipality, the LCC conducted 28 seminars⁴² for students and four seminars for teachers on reducing hate speech. There participated more than 700 students from 8th-12th grades and 100 teachers. Teachers recognise the relevance of hate speech in educational institutions among students of different ages. At the same time, many educators lack the knowledge to talk about it with their students, as it often involves sensitive or controversial issues in society. There is a need for such seminars in other parts of Latvia.

The 2020 project “Promoting Intercultural Dialogue at School” of the association “Education Development Centre” was aimed at promoting social integration in the city of Riga by implementing intercultural education activities aimed at strengthening the values of ethnic harmony and tolerance among people with different ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic heritages.

Non-governmental organisations organise activities to reduce racism and discrimination in the framework of various international projects.

In 2021 and 2022, the LCC organised two seminars in Riga and Liepaja for young people on hate speech and the role of freedom of expression as part of the international project “Active European Citizens Against Hate Speech”. 58 young people between the ages of 16 and 30 took part in the seminars. During the seminars, young people planned their own initiatives on reducing hate speech.

In 2022, the LCC and the association “Participation Platform” implemented a capacity-building programme for NGO representatives “Towards a More Tolerant Society”⁴³ to strengthen the capacity of NGOs to respond to manifestations of intolerance, in particular discrimination and hate speech/crimes. 28 participants representing 24 associations from different regions of Latvia took part in it. Because of the programme, NGOs developed and implemented their own initiatives to promote tolerance and raise awareness among different target groups on how to respond to discrimination and hate crime/speech. The target groups of the NGOs include students, young people, young mothers, seniors, social workers. By 30 June 2022, a total of eight initiatives have been implemented, involving almost 300 participants.

In 2021 and 2022, the LCC in collaboration with association “Make Room Europe” organised three information seminars “Discrimination, hate crime and hate speech: what can I do?”⁴⁴ for foreign citizens, foreign students, people with refugee or alternative status who are living in Latvia. During the discussions most

⁴² The seminars were organised within the framework of projects supported by the Education, Culture and Sport Department of Riga City Council. For example, <https://cilvektiesibas.org.lv/lv/news/istenots-projekts-saki-ne-naid-arunai-440/>; <https://cilvektiesibas.org.lv/lv/news/ir-istenots-projekts-kopa-pret-dezinformaciju-un-n-551/>

⁴³ The programme is implemented within the framework of the project “Towards a More Tolerant Society: information, education, support and cooperation” supported by the Active Citizens Foundation. More information about the project: <https://cilvektiesibas.org.lv/en/news/noslegusies-nvo-kapacitates-stiprinanas-programm-567/>

⁴⁴ More information about the project: <https://cilvektiesibas.org.lv/en/news/14maijs-ir-organizets-pirmais-tiessaistes-seminars-529/>

participants admitted that they had experienced discrimination, hate crimes and/or hate speech, but had never reported these incidents to any authority, neither to the police, neither Ombudsman or NGO.

Valmiera Municipality has participated in the world's largest people photography project "*Inside out*", by taking photos of people in Valmiera Municipality and creating a photo exhibition on the facade and chimney of the former boiler house in Valmiera. By sharing their photo publicly, people draw attention to intolerance and racism. A total of 23 social educators and psychologists from educational institutions in Valmiera Municipality and surrounding municipalities, representatives of orphanages and social services took part in the training on tackling violence and racism. Latvian Optibet Football Super League clubs RFS and Valmiera FC with their collective photo have expressed their opinion that racism in the world needs to be eradicated.

In order to decrease the manifestations of aggression and incitement to hatred, on 31 March 2022 the Saeima adopted amendments to the Law on Administrative Penalties for Administrative Offences, Public Order and Use of the State Language (which entered into force on 3 May 2022), establishing administrative liability for aggressive behaviour. Administrative liability may be applied for aggressive behaviour which disturbs the peace of another person and involves a threat to harm the health or sexual integrity of the person or his/her relatives, if there are reasonable grounds to fear that the threat may be carried out. Such an offence is punishable by a fine of between 14 and 100 monetary penalty units. The same penalty is also available for threats to property where there are reasonable grounds to fear that the threat may be realised, and for harassment in the form of stalking, surveillance or unwanted, intrusive or disruptive communication. Administrative liability is imposed regardless of whether the aggression is committed through direct or remote communication, including by sending letters, posting information on social networks or other acts aimed at creating a feeling of insecurity. The State Police College has also developed a methodological material "Investigation of Hate Crimes".

In a recommendation issued by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance in 2019, Latvia called on the State Police to establish a unit with the task of ensuring links with vulnerable groups of society in order to increase confidence in the police and address insufficient reporting of racist, homophobic and transphobically motivated hate crimes. As part of the structural reform, the State Police plans to appoint prevention inspectors, whose duties will include, as far as possible, cooperation and work with representatives of various groups of society, including vulnerable groups. Adequate education and professional development are essential for State Police officers to be able to perform their investigative function effectively, including, to the extent possible, ensuring the safety of vulnerable groups in society. The following training programmes run by the State Police College and adult informal education programmes for State Police officers cover the subject of hate crime: "Identification and Investigation of Hate Crimes", "The Awareness of Muslim Culture, Religion and Legal System in the

Context of Human Rights Protection”, “Compliance with Human Rights in the Work of the State Police”, “Police Work in Multinational (Multicultural) Society”, etc. In addition, all regional offices of the State Police provide annual training for officers, and the training programme includes the subject of hate crimes.

2. The situation in the scope of reducing anti-Semitism and fostering Jewish life

In 2016, the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) adopted a non-legally binding working definition of the term “anti-Semitism”, which is widely used around the world, including in official European Commission documents. The aim of such a definition is to educate the society about the forms that anti-Semitism takes, as well as initiatives to recognise and tackle anti-Semitism.⁴⁵

According to the *International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA)*, anti-Semitism is defined as “anti-Semitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of anti-Semitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities”. At the same time, to better clarify the nature of the definition, the *International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA)* offers 11 examples of how anti-Semitism can be expressed, for example in public life, the media, schools, the workplace and the religious domain.⁴⁶

Anti-Semitism takes many forms: religious, political, social, economic, cultural, ethnic and racist.⁴⁷

Latvia has been a member of the *International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA)* since 2004, and on 26 May 2016 Latvia participated in the plenary meeting of the *International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA)* in Bucharest, where a legally non-binding definition of anti-Semitism was adopted. The definition is already being used, for example, by the State Police to identify forms of anti-Semitism and related crimes. With the Plan, Latvia adopts the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of anti-Semitism as a working tool.

One of the most brutal manifestations of anti-Semitism is the Holocaust, which took place during the Second World War in Germany and its occupied territories and was carried out in a targeted and systematic way by the Nazi regime. During the Second World War, approximately 70 000 Latvian Jews were killed.

⁴⁵ European Commission (2021). *Handbook for the practical use of the IHRA Working Definition of Anti-Semitism*. Luxembourg, p.6. Available: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/d3006107-519b-11eb-b59f-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

⁴⁶ The same source, pp. 11-16.

⁴⁷ Ļenskis I., Bērziņš D., association “Latvian Centre for Human Rights” (2015). *Anti-Semitism: history and present*. Riga, p. 4.

Available: https://cilvektiesibas.org.lv/media/attachments/21/01/2016/antisemitisma_brosura.pdf

Today, the Holocaust can be considered one of the most studied historical events in the world and in Latvia.⁴⁸

According to a Eurobarometer survey conducted at the end of 2018, 14% of respondents believed that anti-Semitism exists in Latvia, while 7% admitted that it might have increased over the past five years. Of those who believed that anti-Semitism existed in Latvia: 18% believe that it takes the form of Holocaust denial, 19% believe that anti-Semitism is expressed via the Internet, 13% believe that anti-Semitic graffiti or vandalism is being used, and 11% believe that open hostility or threats against Jews in public places are expressed, 20% that Jewish graves are vandalised, 10% that Jews are physically attacked, 11% that anti-Semitic attitudes in schools and universities are present, 11% that anti-Semitic attitudes in politics are present, and 10% that anti-Semitism is present in the media.⁴⁹

On 13 October 2021, the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Anti-Semitism took place in Sweden. The Malmö Forum aims remembrance of the Holocaust and tackle anti-Semitism. Latvia in the Forum reaffirmed the commitment to continue to strengthen Holocaust remembrance and to contribute at the international level to the fight against misinformation in this domain.⁵⁰

According to the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights research “Overview of anti-Semitic incidents recorded in the European Union 2010-2020”, the situation in Latvia shows that in 2016 criminal proceedings were initiated in relation to the desecration of the Jewish cemetery, for which the perpetrators were prosecuted, in 2017 and 2018 no criminal proceedings were initiated, in 2019 two criminal proceedings were initiated and in 2020 – one criminal proceeding was initiated in relation to anti-Semitism.⁵¹

According to the State Police and the State Security Service, four criminal proceedings have been initiated in the period 2019-2022 for crimes allegedly related to anti-Semitism. In 2019, two such criminal proceedings were initiated under Article 78 of the Criminal Law (“Incitement to national, ethnic and racial hatred”). In 2020, one criminal proceeding was initiated for a crime allegedly related to anti-Semitism, and in September 2021, a decision was made to prosecute one person under Article 78 (2) of the Criminal Law for a comment posted on the social networking site Facebook expressing blatant intolerance, hatred and violence against Jewish people.

Overall, the percentage of anti-Semitic crimes in Latvia is low. Also, every incident (administrative, criminal and sometimes even civil) that comes to the

⁴⁸ The same source, pp. 29-32.

⁴⁹ Special Eurobarometer 484 (2018). *Perceptions of anti-Semitism*.

⁵⁰ Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism – Remember ReAct (13 October 2021). *Outcome Document. Pledges presented at the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism*. pp.34-35. Available: <https://www.government.se/4ad3b7/contentassets/7d3985b4106c41e69d699719533f16c0/outcome-document---pledges-presented-at-the-malmo-international-forum-on-holocaust-remembrance-and-combating-antisemitism.pdf>

⁵¹ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2021). *Antisemitism: Overview of anti-Semitic incidents recorded in the European Union. 2010-2020*. Luxembourg, p.58. Available: <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2021/antisemitism-overview-2010-2020>

attention of law enforcement authorities is recorded in the Electronic Event Log and the data is reviewed and compiled on a regular basis, also assessing the problematic nature of individual subject issues. Since 1998, the State Police has provided protection for the Peitav Shul synagogue in Riga, and since then no crimes have been committed against the cultural sites of the Jewish community.

The World Jewish Congress' statement on Latvia's Universal Periodic Review at the 48th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (September-October 2021) mentions that anti-Semitism in Latvia is predominantly found on the Internet, but that the overall level of anti-Semitism in society is low.⁵² Considering several years of statistics and tendencies, there is a general problem with hate speech and online expressions of hateful attitudes in Latvia. Therefore, the State Police, in cooperation with popular online portals in Latvia, monitors comments, i.e., if a person (anonymous or registered) incites hatred or promotes hate speech in an online comment, the comment is deleted and the information available to the portal is passed on to the State Police for further decision-making.

According to the association's "Latvian Centre for Human Rights" 2015 publication "Antisemitism: History and present", anti-Semitic expressions in the Latvian online environment are mostly observed in connection with the restitution of property to the Jewish community, as well as the development of the conflict in the Middle East.

As part of the third cycle of the Universal Periodic Review of the United Nations Human Rights Council, one of the recommendations made to Latvia was to promote the issue resolution of restitution of Jewish property⁵³ in accordance with the 2009 Terezin Declaration⁵⁴. On 10 February 2022, the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia adopted the Law "On Goodwill Reparation to the Jewish Community of Latvia". The purpose of the Law "On Goodwill Reparation to the Jewish Community of Latvia" is, based on the fact that the majority of the pre-war Jewish community of Latvia was destroyed during the Holocaust, to recognise that the Latvia is not to blame and is not responsible for the Holocaust committed by the Nazi regime during the occupation of Latvia and the nationalisation of property by the Soviet occupation regime, but affirming the good will of Latvia to eliminate the historical injustices caused by the Nazi totalitarian regime's Holocaust and the Soviet communist totalitarian regime's actions in the territory of Latvia, to restore justice and to support the Jewish community of Latvia by compensating the cadastral value of the real estate not recovered in the process of restitution of property rights.⁵⁵

⁵² United Nations, Human Rights Council (2021). *Latvia, UPR Report Consideration - 31st Meeting, 48th Regular Session*. Available: <https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1m/k1mb55g34o>

⁵³ United Nations, Human Rights Council. *Universal Periodic Review – Latvia*. Available: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/upr/lv-index>

⁵⁴ Terezin Declaration. Available: <https://wjro.org.il/our-work/international-declarations-resolutions/terezin-declaration/>

⁵⁵ Law "On Goodwill Reparation to the Jewish Community of Latvia", adopted on 10 February 2022 by the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia. Available: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/330185-par-labas-gribas-atlidzinajumu-latvijas-ebreju-kopienai>

Several activities have also taken place in Latvian municipalities to reduce anti-Semitism and preserve the Jewish life. Every year on 4 July, the Jelgava City Municipality commemorates the Day of Remembrance of the Victims of the Genocide of the Jewish People. Once a year, Jewish Culture Days are held to promote Jewish culture, provide information and education, and bring the community together. At the same time, the learning of the Hebrew language and history is also promoted by celebrating the national holidays of Pesah, Purim and Rosh–ha shana, and organising events that mark the anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel. The Jewish dance group “Simha” and the association “Jelgava Jewish Society” operate in Jelgava.

The Riga City Municipality has supported several projects aiming to reduce anti-Semitism, such as the 2018 project of the association “Riga Jewish Community” “Seminar “Tolerance and Diversity””, which was dedicated to the methodology of teaching and learning about sensitive historical issues and genocide history, as well as the principles of tolerance, diversity, human rights in Latvia and the world. The 2020 project “Kultū(R)īga” of the association “Creative Association for Youth “TREPES”” was focused on promoting social integration in the city of Riga and promoting the formation of a cohesive society through ethnic harmony and intercultural dialogue between individuals and groups with different ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds and heritage.

At the same time, the Riga City Municipality has also supported projects focusing on the preservation of the Jewish lifestyle, including the association “Jewish Community of Riga” 2020 project “Minorities in Latvia: today's view”. A series of lectures were organised in the framework of the project, offering a modern perspective on the past and present of Latvia's ethnic communities, providing insights into the latest findings and highlighting lesser-known aspects of history. The lectures discussed the role of various minorities in Latvian history, the views of certain segments of Latvian society (intellectuals, special services, politicians) on minorities and diversity, as well as alternatives to inter-ethnic relations in Latvian history. The association “Žanis Lipke Memorial” received support for the implementation of private museum activities with the aim of highlighting the issue of saving Jews using the museum's collection, reducing prejudice against ethnic minorities and other religions through educational programmes, discussions on Holocaust films, theatre performances and meetings with Jewish families in the museum, and developing new educational programmes for educational institutions.

The Riga City Municipality also supports the association's “Riga Jewish Community” choir “Šofar”, as well as initiatives supporting the Jewish lifestyles: coordinated subjects in Hebrew and Jewish history in the educational programmes of the Š.Dubnova Riga Jewish High School, flexible learning processes, respecting the Jewish holidays and other traditions are supported. Since 2013, the NGO House has been operating in Riga, offering free resources to NGOs in Riga for various activities, networking, exchange of information, best practice and

experience, and training of activists. The Jewish Association "Goral" regularly uses the offered possibilities.

On 29-31 July 2022, the klezmer band "LChaim" from Rēzekne participated in the Jaunjelgava Town Festival in Aizkraukle Municipality with a repertoire of Jewish music rhythms. During the celebration, the importance and impact of Jews in the development of the city was highlighted, as well as the Holocaust and repression and their impact was mentioned, and an educational tour of the Jaunjelgava Jewish cemetery took place, where everyone could learn about the daily life, fates and traditions of the Jewish people. A monument is being built in Jaunjelgava – a memorial stele in front of the Jaunjelgava Great Synagogue, which will reflect the old appearance of the Great Synagogue, mention its name and the period when it was working.

The municipality of Bauska has implemented a number of activities focused on reducing manifestations of anti-Semitism, as well as on supporting the Jewish lifestyle. On 15 October 2017, an environmental object "Synagogue Garden" created by sculptor Ģ. Burvis was inaugurated in Bauska, Riga Street, on the site of the former Jewish synagogue in cooperation with the Council of Jewish Communities of Latvia. In 2021-2022, the issue of marking and cleaning up the Old Jewish Cemetery has been raised. In 2022, an audio guide "Jews in Bauska" was created. On 7 September 2022, in collaboration with the Šiauliai Museum "Aušra" (in Lithuania), the exhibition "Synagogues and Jews - the Lost World of Litvaks" by Šiauliai artist G. Bogdanavičius was unveiled at the Bauska Museum. In 2017-2022, Aigars Urtāns, Head of the History Department of the Bauska Museum, gave six lectures and reports on the Jews in Bauska and the Holocaust in various locations and audiences, as well as led nine guided tours in the city and museum about the Jews in Bauska.

In the framework of the project "Restoration of the Great Synagogue of Ludza and revival of the Jewish spiritual heritage", the restoration works of the Great Synagogue of Ludza were completed in 2016. Within the framework of the programme "Latvian School Bag", in 2022 it was planned to implement museum-educational lessons for 5th-12th grade students "Get to know the history of the Jewish community of Ludza", which will take place in the Great Synagogue of Ludza. During these lessons, students have the opportunity to learn more about the history of the Jewish community of Ludza, its traditions and their writing system. The Ludza Jewish Society is active in Ludza, taking care of the preservation and promotion of Jewish cultural and historical heritage, as well as representing the interests of the members of the Ludza Jewish Society in state, municipal and other institutions.

Since 2004, the Preiļi Museum of History and Applied Arts, an institution of the Preiļi Municipality, in cooperation with the Preiļi Municipality Cultural Centre, has been organising commemorative events for the victims of the Holocaust in Preiļi. These events are traditionally held on the first Sunday in August, close to 9th August, when the last Jews were murdered in Preiļi. In 2004, a memorial to the victims of the Holocaust was inaugurated in Preiļi. In 2013 and 2014, German

students together with the youth of Preiļi 1st Primary School cleaned the Jewish cemetery. In 2015, a memorial arch to the Jewish community was unveiled in Preiļi with the help of private funds. In 2017, an educational programme for 9th-12th grade students “Thinking about the Holocaust means thinking about yourself” was developed and is being offered to educational institutions. In 2020, the programme was included in the project “Latvian School Bag” and is being offered to other educational institutions in Latvia. In 2021, the Preiļi Museum of History and Applied Arts organised two online lectures “The Jewish Community in Preiļi and the Holocaust” for 12th grade students of the Preiļi State Gymnasium. For all the interested, the museum organised a Dr.Sc.Comm. Didzis Bērziņš online lecture “The Holocaust in Latvia and Latgale: events, context, echo”.

Several books have been published about Jews and the life of Jewish communities in the Talsi region: the book “Talsi Jews” by historian, teacher of history, philosophy, politics and law at Talsi State Gymnasium Antra Grūbe (association “Aleksandra Pelēča lasītava”, published in 2013) – an extensive study of Jews and their lives. Information about the Jews and their families who lived in the Talsi region can also be found in the collections of articles “Talsi Regional Museum Articles I”, “Talsi Regional Museum Articles II” and “Talsi Regional Museum Articles III” published by the Talsi Regional Museum. From 2018 to 2020, an ambitious project – the restoration of the Sabile Synagogue – was implemented. The Sabile Jewish Synagogue was used for its original purpose until Second World War.

The Valmiera Municipality has hosted the inauguration of the decorative dendrological composition “Unharvested Harvest” at the memorial to the fallen in the Second World War, which is also special because during the Soviet period the authors managed to convey the message that it is a tribute to the people who were forced to leave their homes in 1941 and 1949, as well as to the victims of the Holocaust.

IV. Measures to achieve the objective of the Plan

The goal of the Plan							
Performance indicators		Subjective experience of discrimination, ESS (2020 9.8% ⇒ 2024 7.2%).					
No	Measure	Activity result	Performance indicator	Reference to the policy document or laws and regulations	Responsible institution	Co-responsible institutions	Due date (up to six months)
1.	Initiatives for developing a unifying commemoration culture	Public awareness about controversial issues in Latvian history, including the repressions committed by the communist regime and the Nazi regime against the Latvian population during the Second World War, has improved.	<p>At least 2 events are organised each year on the repression of the Latvian population by the communist regime during the Second World War;</p> <p>At least 1 commemorative event is organised each year in memory of the victims of the Holocaust and the Latvians who saved Jews during the Second World War;</p> <p>At least 1 commemorative event is organised each year in memory of the victims of the Roma Holocaust during Second War World.</p>	SPASAP	MC		2nd half of 2023
2.	Hate Speech Reduction Support Programme within the project “Capacity Building and Awareness Raising to Prevent and Eliminate Intolerance in Latvia - CALDER”	<p>Public awareness on hate speech online, the risks faced by young people on the internet and media education has been promoted;</p> <p>People's ability to identify hate speech, report it and use constructive methods to combat it is promoted;</p> <p>Reducing public tolerance of hate speech.</p>	<p>A research has been carried out on the legal framework for tackling hate crimes and xenophobia, including homophobia and hate speech online, and legal framework's implementation in practice in Latvia;</p> <p>Proposals for amendments to the legislation have been developed and presented in line with the results of the research;</p> <p>Guidelines have been developed for lawyers and other relevant parties on applying legal rules correctly and effectively in practice;</p>	SPASAP	SIF	UL, State Police, Judicial Administration, Prosecutor's Office	1st half of 2023

			<p>A training programme for professionals directly involved in fighting hate crime has been developed and tested;</p> <p>16 police officers, 16 prosecutors, 16 judges, 16 SIF employees and 3 employees from each partner institution have been trained and will subsequently provide training (12 in total).</p>				
3.	Vigilance promotion activities	Public education and awareness on hate speech on the internet, how to recognise it and what to do to protect oneself is promoted.	In 2023, a special information material has been developed and a vigilance promotion event organised.		SP		2nd half of 2023
4.	Compilation and analysis of data on safety and psychological well-being in general and vocational educational establishments	Data on safety and psychological well-being in educational institutions, information on equality and non-discrimination in the educational environment are compiled and analysed.	In 2023, a compilation of information has been made following the accreditation of general and vocational education institutions.	Cabinet Regulation No 618 of 06.10.2020	SEQS	Educational institutions	2nd half of 2023

5.	Promotion of active inclusion to promote equal opportunities and active participation and improve employability ⁵⁶	<p>Education/information activities for employees of institutions involved in policy-making and implementation (state and local government) on the integration of the principle of equal opportunities and non-discrimination into policy planning and implementation processes.⁵⁷</p> <p>Support for employers on inclusive working environments and anti-discrimination.⁵⁷</p> <p>Support measures to raise awareness and educate the general public about different groups at risk of discrimination.⁵⁸</p>	<p>Support provided to 211 national, regional or local public administrations or public service bodies, 500 associations and foundations, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises;</p> <p>Support provided to 124 associations and foundations; 18 600 persons at risk of discrimination supported, their risk of discrimination reduced and their inclusion in society promoted.⁵⁹</p>	Cabinet Regulation No.841 ⁶⁰	MW	Project implementers	2nd half of 2023 ⁶¹
6.	Research on the situation of discrimination in Latvia	A research on the situation of discrimination in Latvia has been conducted.	An analytical and data-driven assessment of the situation has been carried out, identifying and analysing the opinions of groups of people vulnerable to discrimination and social exclusion risks, anti-discrimination experts and employer situation assessment, as well as looking into international experience in managing diversity and making recommendations to improve the		SIF	researchers	1st half of 2023

⁵⁶ Objective 4.3.4 of the Specific Support of the European Union Cohesion Policy Programme 2021-2027. More detailed information on the planned projects will be available once the relevant Cabinet regulations will be drafted and approved. The programme “European Union Cohesion Policy Programme 2021-2027” has been approved by the European Commission on 25 November 2022 by the Implementing Decision on the European Regional Development Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Social Fund Plus and the Equitable Realignment Fund for support under the Investment for Jobs and Growth objective in Latvia (CCI 2021LV16FFPR001).

⁵⁷ Measure 4.3.4.1 of the Specific Objective 4.3.4 “Promotion of equal opportunities and non-discrimination” (limited selection of project proposals).

⁵⁸ Measure 4.3.4.2 of the Specific Support Objective 4.3.4 “Support measures for equal opportunities and rights for groups at risk of discrimination in different areas of life” (open selection of project proposals).

⁵⁹ The performance indicators are expected to be achieved by 2028.

⁶⁰ Cabinet Regulation No.814 of 16 November 2021 “On the European Union Cohesion Policy Programme 2021-2027”. Available: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/327732-par-eiropas-savienibas-kohezijas-politikas-programmu-2021-2027-gadam>

⁶¹ The measure is planned to be implemented by 2029.

			situation.				
7.	Support for the IHRA's definition of anti-Semitism in the context of the European Union's anti-Semitism policy	Although anti-Semitism is sparse in Latvia, understanding the problem at global and European Union level, as well as solidarity with other countries in the fight against anti-Semitism, we confirm our readiness to use the definition as a working tool at national level.	Since 2023, it has been established in practice (e.g. through the development of new educational and informative materials, as well as work guidelines) that law enforcement authorities, in addition to the existing legal framework, use the International Holocaust Memorial Alliance's (IHRA) definition of antisemitism as another tool for identifying hate crimes.		MFA, MI, PGO, MJ	MC	2nd half of 2023

			Management									
		22.Ministry of Culture		160 000								
			including:									
			26.01.00 “Implementing measures for integration of society”	160 000								
1.	Initiatives for developing a unifying commemoration culture ⁶²	22.Ministry of Culture	26.01.00 “Implementing measures for integration of society”	160 000								
2.	Hate Speech Reduction Support Programme within the project “Capacity Building and Awareness Raising to Prevent and Eliminate Intolerance in Latvia - CALDER”	08.Society Integration Foundation	67.06.00 “Implementation of European Community initiative projects and measures” ⁶³									

⁶² “Plan for the development of a cohesive and civically active society 2021-2023”. Available: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/329302-par-saliedetas-un-pilsoniski-aktivas-sabiedribas-attistibas-planu-2022-2023-gadam>

⁶³ The funding for the measure is included in the funding indicated for Action 3.2.7 of the SPASAP.

3.	Vigilance promotion activities	14.Ministry of the Interior	Within the budget ⁶⁴									
4.	Compilation and analysis of data on safety and psychological well-being in general and vocational educational establishments	15. Ministry of Education and Science	42.07.00 “Ensuring the functioning of the State Education Quality Service” ⁶⁵									
5.	Promotion of active inclusion to promote equal opportunities and active participation and improve employability	18.Ministry of Welfare	63.08.00 “Implementation of European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) projects and measures (2021-2027)” ⁶⁶									2028
6.	Research on the situation of discrimination in Latvia	08.Society Integration Foundation	01.00.00 Society Integration Foundation Management	11 115								
7.	Support for the IHRA's	11.Ministry of Foreign	Within the budget ⁶⁷									

⁶⁴ The implementation of the measure is part of the core functions of the institution, so it is not possible to allocate a specific amount of funding.

⁶⁵ The implementation of the measure is part of the core functions of the institution, so it is not possible to allocate a specific amount of funding.

⁶⁶ Specific Support Objective 4.3.4 of the European Union Cohesion Policy Programme 2021-2027. More detailed information on the planned funding by year will be available once the relevant Cabinet Regulations will be drafted and approved. The total eligible funding for measure 4.3.4.1 is EUR 2 000 000, including EUR 1 700 000 from the European Social Fund Plus and EUR 300 000 from the state budget. The total eligible funding for measure 4.3.4.2 is EUR 5 582 000, including EUR 4 744 700 from the European Social Fund Plus and EUR 837 300 from the state budget.

⁶⁷ The implementation of the measure is part of the core functions of the institution, so it is not possible to allocate a specific amount of funding.

definition of anti-Semitism in the context of the European Union's anti-Semitism policy	Affairs											
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Measures implemented in 2022

No	Measure	Activity result	Performance indicator	Reference to the policy document or laws and regulations	Responsible institution	Co-responsible institutions	Due date (up to six months)
1.	Intercultural communication training for professionals	Knowledge of cultural diversity and several sector specialists' intercultural dialogue skills have improved, as well as the capacity to implement integration measures has been improved.	At least 200 professionals from different fields have attended the intercultural communication course.	SPASAP	MC		2nd half of 2022
2.	Society awareness and knowledge enhancement measures to reduce discrimination and promote tolerance ¹	Society awareness and knowledge campaign has been developed and implemented to raise awareness about discrimination among different groups of society; to promote tolerance and solidarity of society and different groups of people vulnerable to discrimination; and to raise awareness about the importance of social inclusion and about the availability of services for target groups.	Public awareness and information campaign is continued.		SIF	MC, MW	2nd half of 2022

¹ The activity is implemented within the ESF Operational Programme 2014-2020 “Growth and Employment”, Specific Support Objective 9.1.4 “To increase the integration of persons at risk of discrimination into society and the labour market”, Measure 9.1.4.4 “Promoting Diversity (Prevention of Discrimination)”. Some activities of the measure are also included in the Guidelines for Social Protection and Labour Market Policy 2021-2027 (approved by the Cabinet on 01.09.2021), the Plan for the Promotion of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men 2021-2023 (approved by the Cabinet on 17.08.2021) and the Plan for the Promotion of Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities 2021-2023 (approved by the Cabinet on 17.08.2021).

No	Measure	Activity result	Performance indicator	Reference to the policy document or laws and regulations	Responsible institution	Co-responsible institutions	Due date (up to six months)
3.	Survey on discrimination in general and vocational education institutions	Awareness of educational institutions on the importance of discrimination/anti-discrimination in education has been developed, information on addressing discrimination issues in educational institutions has been obtained.	A survey of general and vocational education teachers and students is carried out and the results are compiled.	Cabinet Regulation No 618 of 06.10.2020 ²	SEQS	Educational institutions	2nd half of 2022
4.	Targeted measures to promote a cohesive society	Tolerance and social cohesion between different groups of people at risk of discrimination are promoted.	Targeted support and thematic activities to raise public awareness and knowledge of the principles of non-discrimination – discrimination based on sex, age, disability, race or ethnicity, sexual orientation and religion or belief – have been implemented. 6 service contracts have been concluded, each for its own area of discrimination, providing for the implementation of a series of awareness-raising measures.		SIF	NGO and PR agencies	2nd half of 2022
5.	Public opinion poll on public perception of aspects of discrimination	The opinion of society about awareness and knowledge of discrimination based on gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation has been compiled.	A representative public opinion poll and an analysis of the data obtained have been carried out.		MW	researchers	2nd half of 2022

² Cabinet Regulation No 618 of 6 October 2020 “Procedure for Accreditation of Educational Institutions, Examination Centres, Other Institutions and Educational Programmes Established by the [Law of Education](#) and Professional Performance Assessment of Heads of Educational Institutions”. Available: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/317820-izglitibas-iestazu-eksaminacijas-centru-citu-izglitibas-likuma-noteiktu-instituciju-un-izglitibas-programmu-akreditacijas>

Funding of the measures implemented in 2022

No	Task/Measure	Budget department	Budget programme (sub-programme) code and name	Funding in 2022
		Financing for the implementation of the measures covered by the Plan in total in 2022		878446
		including:		
		08.Society Integration Foundation		702 474
			including:	
			01.00.00 Society Integration Foundation Management”	378855
			63.07.00 “Implementation of projects and measures of the European Social Fund (ESF)”	304 799
			67.06.00 “Implementation of European Commission initiative projects and measures”	18 820
		18.Ministry of Welfare		
			including:	
			63.07.00 “Projects implemented by the European Social Fund (ESF) in the welfare sector (2014-2020)”	15 972
		22.Ministry of Culture		

			including:	
			26.01.00 “Implementing measures for integration of society”	160 000
1.	Initiatives for developing a unifying commemoration culture	22.Ministry of Culture	26.01.00 Implementing measures for integration of society	160 000
2.	Intercultural communication training for professionals	22.Ministry of Culture	70.18.00 The Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund ³	
3.	Awareness-raising and awareness-raising measures to reduce discrimination and promote tolerance	08.Society Integration Foundation	63.07.00 “Implementation of projects and measures of the European Social Fund (ESF)” ⁴	304 799
4.	Hate Speech Reduction Support Programme within the project “Capacity Building and Awareness Raising to Prevent and Eliminate Intolerance in Latvia - CALDER”	08.Society Integration Foundation	67.06.00 “Implementation of European Commission initiative projects and measures”	18 820
5.	Vigilance promotion activities	14.Ministry of the Interior	Within the budget	
6.	Survey on discrimination in general and vocational education institutions	15. Ministry of Education and Science	42.07.00 “Ensuring the functioning of the State Education Quality Service” ⁵	

³ The funding for the measure is included in the funding indicated for Action 3.1.1 of the SPASAP.

⁴ Implementation of the measure and the necessary funding (ESF Operational Programme 2014-2020 Growth and Employment) 9.1.4. specific support aim is included in the Plan for the Promotion of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men 2021-2023 drawn up by the Ministry of Welfare within the framework of measure 9.1.4.4. Promoting Diversity (Prevention of Discrimination) for the Promotion of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men (approved by Cabinet Regulation No 578 of 17 August 2021 (Protocol No 56, § 43)). Certain activities of the measure are also included in the Guidelines for Social Protection and Labour Market Policy 2021-2027 (approved by Cabinet Order No 616 of 1 September 2021 (Protocol No 58, § 37)) and the Plan for the Promotion of Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities 2021-2023 (approved by Cabinet Regulations No 577 of 17 August 2021 (Protocol No 56, § 42)).

⁵ The implementation of the measure is part of the core functions of the institution, so it is not possible to allocate a specific amount of funding.

7.	Compilation and analysis of data on safety and psychological well-being in general and vocational educational establishments	15. Ministry of Education and Science	42.07.00 “Ensuring the functioning of the State Education Quality Service” ⁶	
8.	Promotion of active inclusion to promote equal opportunities and active participation and improve employability	18.Ministry of Welfare	63.08.00 “Implementation of European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) projects and measures (2021-2027)” ⁷	
9.	Targeted measures to promote a cohesive society	08.Society Integration Foundation	01.00.00 Society Integration Foundation Management	333 565
10.	Research on the situation of discrimination in Latvia	08.Society Integration Foundation	01.00.00 Society Integration Foundation Management	45 290
11.	Support for the IHRA's definition of anti-Semitism in the context of the European Union's anti-Semitism policy	11.Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Within the budget ⁸	
12.	Public opinion poll on public perception of aspects of discrimination	18.Ministry of Welfare	63.07.00 “Projects implemented by the European Social Fund (ESF) in the welfare sector (2014-2020)”	15 972

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⁶ The implementation of the measure is part of the core functions of the institution, so it is not possible to allocate a specific amount of funding.

⁷ Specific Support Objective 4.3.4 of the European Union Cohesion Policy Programme 2021-2027. More detailed information on the planned funding by year will be available once the relevant Cabinet Regulations will be drafted and approved. The total eligible funding for measure 4.3.4.1 is EUR 2 000 000, including EUR 1 700 000 from the European Social Fund Plus and EUR 300 000 from the state budget. The total eligible funding for measure 4.3.4.2 is EUR 5 582 000, including EUR 4 744 700 from the European Social Fund Plus and EUR 837 300 from the state budget.

⁸ The implementation of the measure is part of the core functions of the institution, so it is not possible to allocate a specific amount of funding.