

**The project «FreeEx – Responsibility. Freedom of expression» was funded with the support of the European Union under the Programme "Europe for Citizens"**

**Strand 2 –Measure 2.3 "Civil Society Projects"**

**3 main events have been carried out within this project:**

**Event 1: The Conference: Civil Society Facing Pressure – Impact, Reaction, Strategies**

**Participation:** The event involved 40 citizens, including 33 participants from Romania, 4 participants from Austria, 2 participants from Bulgaria, and 1 participant from Croatia.

**Location/ Dates:** The event took place in Bucharest, Romania, on 02/11/2018.

**Short description:** The aim of the one day public debate with European and national experts was to discuss European and country specific constellations regarding freedom of expression. It revealed that civil societies in Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania, and Austria, are faced with a couple of common issues like the tough situation of critical journalists, the important role of education and media literacy. The thin and fluid line between hate speech and freedom of expressions was further underlined.

**Event 2: A series of four online reflection seminars in form of “Webinars”**

**Participation:** The event involved 42 citizens, including 16 participants from Austria, 3 participants from Germany, 3 participants from Romania, 2 participants from Bulgaria, 2 participants from Croatia, 2 participants from Italy, and 1 participant each from Czech Republic, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland.

**Location/ Dates:** The events took place online, on 13/03/2019, 15/03/2019, 26/03/2019, and on 28/03/2019,

**Short description:** The aim of the events was to further discuss with different European experts the experiences collected in the pre-phase of the project and to develop cross-sectional strategies on how the topic of responsible freedom of expression can be promoted in social live with the main focus on countering hate speech. It was the basis for the collection of counterstrategies compiled to result in a tool-kit brochure in 5 languages.

**Event 3: European Conference: Freedom of Expression**

**Participation:** The event involved 62 citizens, including 27 participants from Austria, 17 participants from Romania, 3 participants from Hungary, 2 participants from Bulgaria, 2 participants from Croatia, 2 participants from Germany, 2 participants from Slovakia, and 1 participant each from Cyprus, Czechia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, UK, and the United States of America.

**Location/ Dates:** The event took place in Vienna/Austria, on 14/06/2019

**Short description:** The aim of the one-day conference was to put knowledge into practice with a public panel discussion in the morning where European experts explained the challenges and counter-strategies regarding hate speech and disinformation; in the afternoon the European initiative “No hate speech movement” was presented and group works were dedicated to different project-related topics regarding counter-strategies and real-life constellation – how it works in practice. The outcomes of the event were also incorporated in the tool-kit.

**Side events**

1. Additionally in the partner countries **focus group meeting events** took place, involving approx. 30 participants from Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, and Romania. The aim was to find out from relevant stakeholders from civil society, media experts and researchers how the respective societies perceive current threats to the freedom of expression.
2. One **workshop** with 5 volunteers took place in Vienna, with participants from Austria, Albania, Bulgaria and Italy, including 4 volunteers from the European Solidarity Corps.