



MONITORING REPORT ON HATE SPEECH IN ALBANIA

2025

DORENTINA HYSA



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Introduction

This report depicts the situation of Hateful and Discriminatory Discourse (HDD) in the Albanian media environment, analyzing the prevalence, forms, trigger events and severity of the discourse based on reported incidents retrieved from media monitoring.

Media monitoring was conducted by Albanian Woman in Audiovisual (AWA) during January 2024 - June 2025, using the same methodology as in previous reports. In total 96 HDD incidents were reported during the monitoring period, which were subject of quantitative and qualitative data analysis.

The most prevalent HDD incidents for the reporting period were against gender (40.6%), journalists (12.5%) and political opponents (12.5%). The HDD against gender remains concerning and widespread, while that against journalists and political opponents has significantly increased, compared to the previous reports. The positive change is the reduction on the HDD against sexual minorities, ethnicity and religion.

Main trigger events that correlate with the increase of HDD against journalists and political opponents were the parliamentary elections held in May 2025, the arrest of the Mayor of Tirana, ongoing investigative articles published, level of media independence and institutional accountability. These developments shaped the tone, prevalence and sentiment of HDD.

According to Freedom House's [2025 report](#), Albania remains "partly free", with persistent challenges in judicial independence, political pluralism, and the protection of civil liberties. Similarly, Reporters Without Borders [ranked](#) the country 99th in 2024 and 80th in 2025 out of 180 countries for press freedom, highlighting political pressure on media outlets, poor enforcement of journalistic ethics, and increasing threats toward investigative reporters.

In this context, media, often aligned with political or commercial interests, have become both platforms and amplifiers of HDD. Particularly important to mention is the wave of derogatory rhetoric during the election campaign, where political leaders frequently substituted policy debate with personal insults and symbolic dehumanization. This is an indicator of a broader pattern in which discriminatory discourse, violence and aggression are normalized and glorified across both traditional and online channels, and in society.



Methodological Approach

The report follows a methodological approach that combines qualitative and quantitative research methods. The same methodology was used in previous reports published in [2022](#) and [2023](#). This methodology enables a comprehensive overview of the current situation of the Hateful and Discriminatory Discourse (HDD) in Albania by identifying trends, main targets, authors of hateful and divisive narratives, severity of the narratives and their audience outreach.

The overall purpose of this monitoring research report is to analyze the Hateful Discriminatory Discourse (HDD) in the media environment in Albania during January 2024 - June 2025.

The objectives of the research report are:

- > To identify main trends of HDD in the public discourse in Albania during January 2024 - June 2025;
- > To assess the severity of the HDD, through sentiment analysis for narratives and sub narratives for prevalent target-groups.

Data collection

This report relies on data that were collected through media monitoring during January 2024 - June 2025. Media monitoring was done weekly to identify and report cases of HDD related to gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual minorities and migrants/refugees and other categories, allowing the monitors to register all identified incidents. In total, 96 incidents are included in the analysis.

The incidents were reported and recorded using the same [instrument](#) that was used in the previous years, which collects information on incidents' date of publication, country where it happened, type of hatred identified, the content/narrative of the discourse, the author/s of the incident, media in which it was identified and the reach.

Data analysis

The collected data were subject to quantitative and qualitative analysis. The quantitative data were coded and analyzed through SPSS, using descriptive statistics tests (frequencies and cross tabulation) to understand the main trends of HDD in Albania for the reporting period. While qualitative analysis consists on narrative/sub narrative analysis, sentiment analysis, comparative and visibility analysis that together provide an in-depth understanding of the narratives.

Limitations

Primary data are collected through media monitoring, which has been conducted by two media monitors. As a result of that, the identification, reporting and categorization of the incidents could be biased based on the judgement of each of the media monitors.

Additional to that, the incidents' report questionnaire, despite being used systematically and being comprehensive, does not cover all types of hate speech that occur in media, making it difficult for the monitors to categorize accurately some of the cases of HDD.

The number of incidents covered in this report is relatively high, and while they are all subject of quantitative and qualitative analysis, only few cases are selected to illustrate the narratives. Additionally, narrative analysis is done only for the three most prevalent categories, not for all categories.

Narratives and sub-narratives of HDD

General overview of HDD in Albania

The report covers incidents occurring in the period of January 2024 – June 2025. In total, during this period have been reported 96 incidents, out of which 12 have had multiple HDD categories, and 84 have been recorded as separate categories. As the table 1 shows, the **prevalent HDD narratives are against gender (40.6%), political opponents (12.5%), and journalists (12.5%)**. HDD on gender remains almost on the same levels as in the last report, however narratives against political opponents and journalists have significantly increased compared to the previous monitoring reports of [2022](#)¹ and [2023](#)².

1. In 2022, HDD on gender was (20.5%), political opponents (7.2%) and journalists (2%)

2. In 2023, HDD on gender was (41%), political opponents (NA) and journalists (2%)

Total number of incidents: 96		Multiple categories incidents excluded from separate categories		Multiple categories incidents included in separate categories	
		N	Percent (%)	N	Percent (%)
HDD Category ^a	Against Gender	39	40.6%	50	45.9%
	Against Sexual Minority	6	6.3%	8	7.3%
	Against Ethnicity	3	3%	6	5.5%
	Against Journalists	12	12.5%	15	13.8%
	Against Political Opponents	12	12.5%	16	14.7%
	Against Public Institutions	4	4%	4	3.7%
	Against Children/Minors	3	3%	4	3.7%
	Against Migrants	1	1%	1	0.9%
	Against Religion	1	1%	2	1.8%
	Others (PwD, etc.)	3	3%	3	2.8%
Multiple Categories		12	12.5%		
Total		96	100%	109	100%

Table 1. HDD Categories

Other HDD narratives, include **sexual minorities (7.3%), and ethnicity (5.5%)**, which have a significant decrease, as compared to the previous reports. There are two new categories of HDD that have been identified during the monitoring period, those against **public institutions (3.7%)** and **children/minors (3.7%)**. While, on the other hand, narratives against religion and migrants/refugees remain significantly low.

The results of the HDD dissemination amongst categories reflect and are strongly related to the socio-political events happening in the country, including in particular the parliamentary elections held in May 2025, the arrest and imprisonment of the mayor of Tirana by the Special Court Against Corruption and Organized Crime, as well as the ongoing social problems (gender-based violence, domestic violence, sexual abuse/trafficking, bullying, etc.).

HDD on gender

Hateful, discriminatory discourse against gender has dominated in Albanian media environment, even during 2024-2025, remaining in high concerning levels as in the previous reports. The gender based narratives manifest through sensationalism, objectification, and sexist rhetoric either produced by or amplified by media. The fact that the HDD against gender remains prevalent indicates the institutionalization of hate towards women in a patriarchal society and the lack of media professionalism to report with sensitivity towards gender based social issues. The main trigger of HDD against gender is being a girl/woman or a boy/man.

Gender based violence, domestic violence, sexual abuse/exploitation and harassment are persisting social problems. Yet, the incidents show that the media reporting on these sensitive topics is done through the lens of sensationalism, prioritizing entertainment over sensitivity, sharing the victims' names, photos, and personal details in violation of the [Code of Ethics of Journalists](#). The click-bait headlines remain a strategic tool that media use to drive traffic to their articles without caring much about the damage they create to the affected persons, their families and the society in general.

For example, there was a [case](#) of 3 minor girls (aged 15, 16 and 17 years old), victims of sexual exploitations, that was reported in several media outlets and portals. While some media were careful in reporting the case, focusing on the arrest and dismantling of the network, some others used sensational headlines, such as [“prostitution with minors in Tirana”](#), [“3 teenagers prostitution in hotels in Fushë-Krujë”](#), or [“You’ve got it ready at the hotel”](#).

This reporting approach, instead of addressing the phenomenon of sexual exploitations to increase awareness on the topic as well as provide in-depth analysis, shifts the attention to the individual case, highlighting the fact that the girls left home voluntarily, stayed in hotels, took money, etc.

*“3 minors were exploited for prostitution in the Fushë-Krujë area:
[We left home voluntarily.”](#)*

Another similar [case](#), involves a doctor who was charged by the law enforcement for trafficking of minors and pornography. Media reported the case in a way that shifted the attention from the core issue of trafficking of minors and pornography to the number of spouses a man may have, linked with moral and religious considerations. This angle of reporting tends to justify the abusive actions of the doctor towards the minor girl, normalizing the behavior, while the legal provisions are clear on the age of consent which is above 14 years old.

*“The Doctor's Harem! Religion, manipulation or extremism
became the cause of abuse...!”*

When it comes to domestic violence, media follows the same reporting approach, sensation over responsibility, drama over critical and systemic analysis, and privacy violations. For example, the [case](#) of two women murdered in Kosovo within five days was also reported in Albanian media, however, the focus was on victims’ identities and romantic relationships, rather than highlighting prevention measures or institutional accountability. Similarly, the [case](#) of domestic violence against the folk singer Maya was transformed into a tabloid story rather than a platform for advocacy.

This type of media coverage concerning the domestic violence normalizes the violence, prevents the victims from asking help when needed and promotes the endurance of violence by the victims. These narratives can have devastating impact on the victims, such as in the [case](#) of the actress Rita Lati, which according to the confession made by her daughter, was subject of domestic violence but “accepted” the situation as a result of public and social pressure.

*“The daughter tells the shocking story of Rita Lati:
Dad beat her, but she didn't leave because they called her a bitch.”*

The objectification and sexualization of women is another repeated form of HDD. Female bodies are often used as marketing tools unrelated to the product being sold, as seen in the [Lori Caffè advertisement](#) featuring a bikini-clad model to promote a coffee drink, or the [Digital Alb campaign](#) that equated women with luxury goods. Such portrayals reduce women to visual commodities, erasing their agency and reinforcing gender stereotypes. Even though the revised Broadcasting Code has a Chapter on Gender Equality and Sexism, the situation remains the same, with media and journalists repeatedly reinforcing gender based stereotypes and sexism.

On the other hand, women in politics face direct and overt sexism that undermines their professional credibility. Politicians and public figures use gendered insults, appearance-based criticisms, and metaphors rooted in patriarchal norms. For example, MP Edmond Spaho told a colleague she looked fierce as if she was beaten. While a journalist made a [statement](#) related to election results saying that “a buffalo cow got more votes than Jorida!” Such language perpetuates the stereotype that women are not fit for politics or leadership roles.

*"You seem fierce, as if you've been beaten. Has something happened?
Tell us so we can support you."*

Online hate speech against women and girls, emerges as a significant and recurring form of gender-based HDD in digital spaces. It often targets women in politics, journalism, and other high-visibility professions, where attacks are not limited to professional criticism but extend deeply into personal and family life. However, women and girls in general, are subject of it. These online assaults are not isolated incidents. Sometimes, they appear as coordinated waves of harassment, triggered by a woman's media appearance, political statement, or public role.

For example, the [case](#) of Majlinda Bregu, RCC Secretary General, who appeared on the TV program Opinion and after that was target of many derogatory and sexist comments. The comments dealt with her political positions but also her gender, appearance, and family members, showing that women's credibility is attacked through humiliation rather than substantive debate.

*"You are the most corrupt woman among all Albanian women in politics;
you are a leftover and a woman with 500 faces."*

The main authors of HDD against gender are journalists and media personnel, who either say, allow or reproduce harmful narratives. Influencers, bloggers and celebrities are another category responsible for the generation of HDD, followed by politicians'/state officials, and private persons (users on social media).

Visibility analysis shows that the incidents have occurred mainly in television, and then disseminated on online portals and social media profiles of the media channels. The outreach varies from 1000 - 300.000 views depending on the incident, its target, media channel and the headline of the posts/articles. Contents that reproduce HDD in the headlines usually have a wider outreach, receive more engagement and shares through via social media.

HDD on journalists

In contrast to previous reports, HDD against journalists and media has scored a significant increase during 2024 - 2025. What is equally concerning to the increase in number of cases is the nature of the incidents, which include spreading of harmful lies, misinformation, disinformation; cyber-attacks, threats and statements potentially threatening to safety, as well as criminal lawsuits and insults against journalists. The reported incidents indicate that professional journalists and quality media are the main target of HDD that is generated by politicians, state officials and other media that are politically affiliated.

Target of the HDD have been both female and male journalists, in particular those who cover investigative journalism topics, particularly high-level corruption, abuse with public funds, and expose wrongdoing of those in power. The key triggering events for HDD against journalists are related to the publication of the investigative or critical contents that expose different corruption schemes, law violations, as well as abuse of power, which hold high-level politicians and public institutions accountable.

For example, an independent media outlet, Citizens Channel, became subject of a cyber-attack on April 2024, and their content on social media was removed, while their website was banned. The Council of Europe released [a level 2 alert on this attack](#), highlighting that the ban came after reporting on “issues of public interest, including the construction of the National Theater and the granting of permits for skyscraper constructions by the Tirana municipality, where the outlet revealed how construction companies are taking and occupying public land without permission taxes. Other content removed refers to the resistance of the communities in Thirre and Zall Gjocak against the abuse of natural resources.”

Another similar case, targeted [Media Look](#), which for several months had been under attack, until on June 2024 the Facebook profile of its manager, Elvin Luku has been closed, disabling access to the media outlet profiles’ on social media. [According to MediaLook](#), “the timing and nature of the shared content suggest that the attacks might be a reaction to MediaLook’s critical stance on disinformation and government accountability.”

Several media outlets and groups of journalists have reacted and condemned these attacks, including Safe Journalists’ Network, Reporter.al, Citizens.al, Union of Albanian Journalists, the Association of Albanian Journalists.

The direct attack towards quality media is a step back in media freedom, and it intimidates the presence of critical voices in the media. On the other hand, it harms the digital presence, outreach, and relationship these media have built through years with the audience, causing public confusion and making it even harder for them to distinguishing facts/evidences from propaganda and/or misinformation.

There are also other cases of HDD and attacks against journalists, that of public denigrating and defamation, especially towards women journalists, such was in the case of the investigative reporter Ola Xama. She has been the target of persistent threats and defamatory campaigns due to her reporting on the Tirana incinerator scandal involving Mayor Erion Veliaj. Her investigative work exposed irregularities, including allegations of corruption linked to the Mayor and his family. Following her reports, she has faced backlash from politically affiliated media outlets. One published [article](#) accuses her of being a “paid journalist” and a “hired assassin,” escalating to sharing her private address and attacking her family.

“Journalist Ola Xama received money from the government, the Municipality of Tirana, and the incinerator company through her husband, Ilir Pandeli. After the payments stopped, she began ‘denouncing’ corruption on television panels!”

The same online tabloid, targeted Blerjana Bino, who was accused of producing a one-sided report on media freedom that was biased in favour of former Albanian Prime Minister, Sali Berisha. The attack was triggered by the publication of a report entitled [“Media Freedom in Albania: a Shadow Report”](#), published by SciDev and Osservatorio Balkani Caucaso Transeuropa. This [report focused](#) on the third section of the Commission’s 2024 Rule of Law Report, dedicated to media freedom and pluralism, to provide an updated analysis of the Albanian media landscape, including remaining and emerging challenges.

“‘Spider’ of civil society funds, Blerjana Bino, biased reports on attacks on journalists.”

Some other cases concerning HDD against journalists involve state officials and public figures. For example, the [case](#) of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Anila Denaj towards a journalist and her sister after she reported on the Ministry’s failure to administer a brucellosis vaccine, a project costing €1.7 million, and a critical issue impacting public health and agriculture; or the [case](#) of Prime Minister, Edi Rama towards a journalist that asked him a question related to the investment project of Jared Kushner (Donald Trump’s son in law), during a press release and faced intimidation.

Additionally, the [case](#) of a notary who physically assaulted the journalist and the filming crew, restraining them against their will, after she reported on legal violations of the notary.

“Either me or you in this world.”

There are also other similar cases, involving the State Police, members of parliament and other public officials. Even though a vast number of incidents involve HDD generated by public officials, there are also incidents that involve the online public or citizens. For example, a sports journalist, [Ervin Baku](#), was target of massive hate speech because while he was commenting on the Albanian championship, he wore the t-shirt of the volleyball team from Serbia.

“Dog without a country. It feeds off our taxes and plays with our dignity. This dirty person needs a good lesson so that he doesn't step foot anymore in Albania.”

“Life imprisonment... because Albania does not have the death penalty, and the family should be deported.”

While another journalist was subject of [insult and assault](#) by a citizen in a protest supporting former Prime Minister, Sali Berisha. The journalist and her team were physically and verbally attacked and labeled as a “puppet” and “propagandist”.

Visibility analysis shows that the incidents have occurred equally in TVs, online portals (tabloids) and social media. The means of dissemination, indicate the polarization of the media and its use according to political affiliations. The outreach of these incidents is high, reaching up to 300.000 people in social media, taking into account that TVs and online tabloids reach are not publicly shared details.

However, as it was mentioned in several incidents, in particular to the attacks against journalists, cyber-attacks, defamation campaigns, physical and verbal intimidations, the media in general, have shown selective coverage or lack of coverage. This reflects the underlying political affiliations or pressures that compromise journalistic integrity and the media's role as a watchdog.

HDD on political opponents

HDD against political opponents has increased by 5% during 2024-2025, compared to the previous report of [2022](#). Even though the HDD generated by and targeting political opponents and women in politics has always been present in Albanian media environment, during this period it was intensified.

The incidents involve multiple categories of HDD, including hate speech, sexism and gender stereotypes, incitement to violence, dehumanization, homophobic insinuations, and politically motivated disinformation. These were perpetrated by political figures, more often by those in positions of power, and by media outlets, either directly or through amplification. The main trigger events of the HDD against political opponents are the Parliamentary Elections, the arrest of the Mayor of Tirana, additional to ongoing political developments.

On May 11, 2025 in Albania were held the Parliamentary elections. The Socialist Party, had been in power for 3 consecutive mandates, and would strongly fight to keep the power, while on the other hand the opposition, officially represented by the Democratic Party, would fight to take the power. The election campaigns from these two main parties, far from focusing on presenting the electorate with their strategic plans, focused on denigrating the opponents using hate speech, ridicule, and dehumanization.

Excessive symbolic dehumanization was used during the campaign by Prime Minister, Edi Rama, at the same time, Chairman of Socialist Party, against its Democratic Party opponents. For example, throughout the campaign he referred repeatedly to the opposition leader, Sali Berisha, as “the swamp owl”, a metaphor designed to ridicule and otherize. The phrase portrays Berisha not as a political actor but as a creature associated with decay and darkness. This rhetorical tactic reduces the opponent to an animalistic caricature rather than engaging with their political arguments.

In response to this symbolic dehumanization, the opposition strategist Chris LaCivita later posted an image of an owl capturing a mouse, implicitly depicting Rama himself as prey. This feedback loop exemplifies how Socialist Party rhetoric helped set the tone for a campaign built on mutual dehumanization rather than policy debate.

Additionally, other inanimate metaphors, ridicule through physical appearance, occupational diminishment or comparison to people with disability, were used to demean political opponents. Some examples of such discourse are “an archaeological vase”, “a worthless vase”, “autistic”, “screwball”, etc. These narratives suggest uselessness, fragility, and obsolescence. By framing an opponent as a static, decorative object, the author implies they have no functional role in politics and belong to the past, thus erasing their relevance in current democratic processes.

“I wouldn’t even make him a ticket inspector.”

Physical and verbal violence is another recurring type of HDD within parliamentary and TV debates. For example, Opposition MP Flamur Noka has been involved in multiple incidents, physically preventing colleagues from speaking, throwing a water bottle at Minister Taulant Balla, and even making a vulgar hand gesture toward political opponents. In one instance, during a heated parliamentary exchange, he threatened:

“We will jump down your throat, like a cat... you will see that Parliament on fire very soon.”

Similarly, in the TV show “360 Gradë”, Laert Vasili escalated a verbal dispute with Marin Suli into a physical assault, throwing a bottle of water while hurling insults: “You are the sister, who sold the ass to Omonia.” The absence of intervention by the host and subsequent media polls asking viewers to judge the aggressor’s justification illustrate how media sometimes trivialize or gamify violent behavior.

The broadcasting of these violent acts by media, the lack of intervention from the hosts/moderators and the amplification of the narratives by putting in the headlines the exact words used, contributes to normalizing violence and deterioration of political discourse.

Sexism and gender stereotypes were also widespread through media or amplified through it. For example, Zegjine Ccaushi, a Socialist Party candidate, used as a political weapon gender-derogatory and homophobic insinuation against her opponent Gazmend Bardhi. Additionally, she mocked him by referred to him as “Gazi i Zegjinesë”, a feminized nickname implying submissiveness or effeminacy.

“You’re too twisted, a ballerina who just sways”

On the other hand, media and journalists, when reporting about the women in politics tend to focus on their physical appearance, looks, or their emotive side as women, relating their contribution in politics with appearance rather than performance.

“I would undress Spiropali. She looks very good.”

Visibility analysis shows that the incidents have occurred mostly on TV, followed by online portals, social media (Facebook, Instagram, Tik-Tok) and Youtube. The outreach of these incidents is high, reaching up to 200.000 people in social media, taking into account that TVs and online tabloids reach are not publicly shared details.

Sentiment Analysis

Sentiment analysis of all cases shows a moderate level of severity, with a mean score of 2.96, indicating negative character. The majority of incidents had a level-3 score (46.9%), followed by level 2-score (26%), and 5-level score (12.5%). On a positive note, not a single incident reached the level-6 score, however, while examining the cases carefully two sentences were found that implicitly indicated death or threats to life.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	1-Disagreement	6	6.3%
	2-Negative Actions	25	26 %
	3-Negative Character	45	46.9%
	4-Demonizing/Dehumanizing	8	8.3%
	5-Violence	12	12.5%
	6-Death	0	0
	Total	96	100.0

To understand the severity of the HDD narratives on the three most prevalent categories, a category specific sentiment analysis was conducted for HDD on gender, journalists and political opponents.

The mean score of the HDD against gender was 3, indicating a moderate sentiment, consisting of negative non-violent narratives. Most prevalent types of contents were insults, negative labeling and stereotypes, and misuse of personal data.

Level	HDD on Gender
1. Disagreement	There are no difficult women, only men who are incapable of manipulating them. There are no difficult women, only women who don't drink alcohol.
2. Negative Actions	Utilizing the victim's image, disclosing her identity, and recirculating her nude photo with her face blurred; Fights, "vulgarity", pools, girls, a recurring formula in so-called 'summer programs'; Erion, you've grown bold, and your mouth eats a lot of s**t -Get lost, go f** yourself.
3. Negative Character	A woman traps the devil in a bottle; Womanizer men; Prostitute; Rape means only will. If she doesn't have the will, the yes, and you rape her, there comes a moment when she might feel pleasure. But, as soon as it ends, she leaves and reports you;
4. Demonising & Dehumanising	Humor is a privilege of the wise, women do not have the capacity to create it; I doubt that women write screenplays; A buffalo cow got more votes than Jorida.
5. Violence	"Don't mention my name again", Erika slaps Buchi, after the "hot" meeting with Klaudia.
6. Death	-

The mean score of the HDD against journalists is 3.5 indicating a moderate to high sentiment. The mean score indicates that there is a mixture of all levels of HDD towards journalists, even though 1/3 of the incidents were of level 5-instigation of violence. The most concerning is the fact that the level 5 incidents involve public/state officials and/or politicians, which creates the ground for the HDD to become actionable in real life and with concrete consequences on the journalists and/or media, as compared to the online hate speech of the citizens, for example.

Level	HDD on Journalists
1. Disagreement	She needs a man to manage RTSH
2. Negative Actions	Today you lose the right to my answers [at press conferences] for the next 60 days. You will go into re-education [camp].
3. Negative Character	Paid journalist, hired assassin; Frëngji (a narrow slit in fortress walls used for firing weapons. Term is used to describe BIRN, framing it as an aggressor rather than an independent journalistic entity); A stupid of the high levels, she is not a lady but a transgender.
4. Demonising & Dehumanising	Dogs and sewer channels; use of a monkey picture to illustrate a journalist; dog without a country; The biggest fault lies with the journalist-penis who is interviewing him and the brothel TV that didn't stop the live broadcast; 'Spider' of civil society funds.
5. Violence	Life imprisonment ... because Albania does not have the death penalty and the family should be deported. This dirty person needs a good lesson so that he doesn't step foot anymore in Albania
6. Death	These should be declared non grata or should be thrown into the wood pile; Either me or you in this world.

The mean score of the HDD against political opponents is 3, indicating a moderate sentiment, which refers to rhetoric involving non-violent characterizations and insults. Despite being of moderate severity, such narratives impact the normalization of the violence in the public and political discourse, promoting aggression in politics as the only means to succeed.

Level	HDD on Political Opponents
1. Disagreement	Are you back again? Do you need a few more million euros to close some small gaps? You are the most corrupt woman among all Albanian women in politics; you are a leftover and a woman with 500 faces; Pity, this whole girl acts like a circus clown, the king's jester..."; What are these clowns that come to Albania?
2. Negative Actions	Vote PD... Let's eliminate the RATS from the sewers and clean the house. Sister, keep your voice down; You disgrace of the Albanian nation, your daughter will pay for your actions because you have exploited these poor people; We, the 5 of us, will give them a finger. Noc, you are the rock.
3. Negative Character	You behave like Gaddafi's bodyguards, praising the leader without question.; Your filthy race. Those like you and even worse than you; You're too twisted, a ballerina who just sways.
4. Demonising & Dehumanizing	Archaeological vase; worthless vase; The short-eared owl and its talons have killed people, not once, but several times, and have shown no remorse.
5. Violence	We will jump down your throat, like a cat; Do not provoke because you will see that Parliament on fire very soon and not only that Parliament.
6. Death	-

Comparative Analysis

This report is based on HDD incidents that have occurred in or disseminated through media during 2024-2025. The incidents targeted different groups, such as women, journalists, political opponents, children/minors, public institutions, sexual minorities and other categories. The narrative analysis allows us compare HDD between categories, highlighting the similarities and differences.

First, a common characteristic between categories is the personalization of the HDD, showing that the discourse frequently shifts from the substantive issue to the target's personal life, physical appearance, or unrelated private matters. From insults, to negative labeling and violence, personal attacks, prevail.

Second, HDDs are often amplified through television headlines, online tabloids, and social media, increasing their reach and impact. Whether originating from political actors, public officials, journalists/media or online users, harmful narratives are amplified by media. Posts and headlines reproducing HDD, often verbatim, tend to achieve higher engagement, incentivizing media outlets to perpetuate such rhetoric for visibility.

Third, in all categories it is identified the recurrence of insults, stereotypes, and dehumanizing metaphors, which contributes to the normalization of aggression and hostility in public and political discourse. These are expressed verbally and non-verbally (through pictures/images/memes).

While the differences noted between categories relate to the trigger events that affect the occurrence of HDD. For example, HDD on gender is always present in the media and triggered simply by gender differences, while HDD against political opponents and journalists are affected by the current political events/developments, such were parliamentary elections, and arrest of public officials.

Another important difference is on the author of the HDD per category, where journalists and media prevail in producing HDD against gender, minors/children, sexual minorities, while politicians, state officials and public figures dominate on HDD against journalists and political opponents.

The type of content/action used towards each category differs. HDD on gender relies heavily on objectification, sexism, victim-blaming, and sensationalism, often triggered by a target's gender alone. While against journalists often involves coordinated campaigns, cyberattacks, or legal intimidation, aiming to undermine professional credibility and restrict press freedom. Lastly, the HDD against political opponents shows the highest degree of symbolic dehumanization and performative aggression, often used as a strategic tool to mobilize supporters rather than address policy issues.

Country actions against HDD

The country actions against HDD, as compared to the previous reports, remains low in terms of efficacy and impact. However, the work of several stakeholders, cannot be diminished because of that.

The Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination continues to process complaints and run awareness campaigns on discrimination, but interventions remained largely reactive, with limited proactive monitoring. The Audiovisual Media Authority (AMA) applies the Broadcasting Code's provisions on gender equality and hate speech, issuing warnings and fines in several cases. However, the persistence of sexist and sensationalist reporting, particularly on television, suggests enforcement is insufficient as a deterrent.

While the civil society played a more visible role. Organizations such as Safe Journalists Network, BIRN Albania, and the Union of Albanian Journalists condemned attacks on journalists and provided safety training for media professionals. Gender-focused NGOs ran campaigns against victim-blaming and sexism, while fact-checkers like Faktoje and Citizen Channel actively monitored political discourse and debunked misinformation, especially during the 2025 elections.

A positive development during this period was [Law on Personal Data Protection](#), which aims to align Albania's legal framework with the European Union's standards, particularly by incorporating General Data Protection Regulation, or GDPR). The Data Protection Law establishes the rules for safeguarding individuals' data and aims to protect fundamental human rights and freedoms, particularly the right to personal data protection. Even though not directly linked to hate speech, the Law foresees the protection of personal data, especially sensitive categories like ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and political opinions, which are often exposed without permission by media and journalists.



Conclusions

This report is based on 96 incidents of HDD against gender, journalists, political opponents, children/minors, sexual minorities and public institutions that have happened during 2024-2025 in traditional (television, radio, newspapers), digital (online tabloids, news portals) and social media (Facebook, Instagram, Tik-Tok) in Albania.

The three most prevalent categories that were subject to hate speech and discriminatory discourse were gender (40.6%), journalists (12.5%) and political opponents (12.5%).

Sentiment analysis shows that the HDD in Albania, even though widespread, remains in moderate levels of intensity. The mean score of all incidents was 2.96, indicating a negative character score, characterized by non-violent rhetoric and insults. The majority of incidents had a level-3 score (46.9%), followed by level 2-score (26%), and 5-level score (12.5%). However, that does not diminish the negative impact that these divisive narratives have on their respective targets and on society in its entirety.

Coverage of gender-based violence and sexual exploitation often prioritizes entertainment over ethics, with cases like the sexual exploitation of the three minor girls reported under sensational lens, shifting attention to the choice of the victims rather than addressing the systemic failures. Objectification, victim-blaming, and sexist language, especially against women in politics, are normalized in public discourse.

Compared to the 2022 and 2023 monitoring, HDD against gender remains the same, while that against journalists and political opponents has grown significantly. Additionally, the HDD against sexual minorities, ethnic groups and religion has decreased. But new categories, against public institutions and children/minors, emerged, suggesting diversification of targets in response to current events and socio-political triggers.

Visibility analysis shows that HDD spreads rapidly when reproduced verbatim in headlines or on social media, often reaching hundreds of thousands of people. Politically aligned outlets amplify or ignore incidents selectively, reinforcing polarization and reducing the likelihood of accountability.



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