

Experts: Capabilities and cooperation of the institutions for combating of the illegal contents to be reinforced

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Last Thursday, on 25 May, a seminar “Strengthening of the Public Information Space within the Geopolitical Realia. Combating and Investigation of the Distribution of the Illegal Audiovisual Contents” took place during which scientific and practical aspects within the investigation and combating of the illegal contents were reviewed, as well as special attention was paid to the current events in the field, circulation trends and main challenges. In parallel to the seminar a press conference took place during which the sector’s professionals introduced to the previous work results and significance of the topic within the geopolitical context of Latvia. The fight against the illegal audiovisual contents has never been so topical as in particular in Latvia there is the highest level of the pirated contents distribution in the European Union. The seminar was organized within the framework of the project EEZ/VP/2022/1 “Support to the State Police for Acceleration and Quality Improvement of Investigation of Economic Crimes in Latvia”.

The seminar in person was attended by 51 participant from the State Police, Prosecutor’s Office and other law enforcement institutions. Simultaneous online broadcast was ensured as well, which was watched by 127 participants. Experts from the State Police, Prosecutor’s Office of the Republic of Latvia, National Electronic Mass Media Council (NEPLP), association “For Legal Contents”, Wide Media PLC and SIA “Tet” introduced to the thematic review and stories of experience. The foreign practice was outlined by the representative of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation.

99 The seminar was opened by the colonel, Deputy Chief of the State Police Central Criminal Police Department Reinis Znotiņš who emphasized: “Currently this is not anymore only about an illegally obtained movie, this is about the Latvian national security. We see how propaganda works and we see our situation as well – some years ago the illegal contents was still freely available in Latgale, our own territory. We as the police and all cooperation partners – NEPLP, association “For Legal Contents”, Prosecutor’s Office of the Republic of Latvia, non-governmental organizations - must work together. We all are interested in strengthening this information space in the country and developing critical thinking capabilities in the society.”

99 The Chief of the State Police Central Criminal Police Department Economic Crime Combatting Department 2nd Division Vitālijs Polovinskis emphasized: “Nowadays when the contents is available everywhere and it is possible to obtain information about the current events from different media resources, it is extremely important to distinguish between the true and misrepresented information. The media contents can affect the public opinion therefore it should be treated seriously and greater attention should be paid to the media which are prohibited in the Republic of Latvia as they clearly and shamelessly propagate Kremlin's narratives which affects the national security and public order.”

The program of the seminar included also such topics of lectures as supervision of distribution of the audiovisual contents and restriction of the illegally distributed contents, consumption trends of the volume of the illegal digital contents, calculation of reimbursement, restriction of illegal television services and retransmission of broadcasts, digital piracy and illegal streaming. At the end of each lecture it was possible to ask questions as well as in order to facilitate the cooperation and enlarge the circulation of opinions participants were encouraged to involve in active mutual discussions throughout the seminar.

Seminar was organized within the framework of the European Economic area grant 2014-2021 programme “International Police Cooperation and Combating Crime” project No.EEZ/VP/2020/1 “Support to the State Police for increasing effectiveness and quality of economic crime investigation in Latvia”

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