

1st Referral Action Day Against Right-Wing Terrorist Online Propaganda



On 27 May 2021, the 1st Referral Action Day against right-wing terrorist online propaganda was coordinated by the European Union Internet Referral Unit at Europol's headquarters in The Hague. The Action Day was joined by a total of 28 international partners: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, and the New York City Police Department.

Referral Action Days are based on the referral by Europol and specialised units in partner countries of terrorist propaganda to online service providers that are responsible for evaluating the content to establish any potential breach of their terms of service. Among the items referred were:

- right-wing terrorist and extremist content;
- material produced by or favouring proscribed right-wing organisations;
- material produced and disseminated concerning relevant right-wing attacks, such as texts, videos, audio files, publications, images, and social media accounts.

During the Referral Action Day, the parties involved reviewed the referral process, from detecting terrorist content to its flagging to online service providers (OSPs). A total amount of 1 038 items were assessed for referral to the OSPs with a request to be reviewed against their terms of service.

The threat posed by violent right-wing extremism has been growing. The terror attacks in Christchurch (New Zealand), Poway (USA), El Paso (USA), Bærum (Norway), and Halle (Germany) were part of a wave of violent incidents worldwide, the perpetrators of which were part of similar transnational online communities and took inspiration from one another.

The use of the internet is becoming increasingly important in this context. This no longer applies only to radicalisation and recruitment but also to the dismantling of crimes by law enforcement. This first Referral Action Day against right-wing terrorist and extremist online propaganda aimed to discover the sources of Internet activities and develop approaches to combat them. Similar joint actions will continue to be organised in the future.