

## EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

*(To be filled in and uploaded as deliverable in the Portal Grant Management System, at the due date foreseen in the system.)*

 Please provide one sheet per event (one event = one workpackage = one lump sum).)

PROJECT	
Participant:	101081500_FONDS ATVERTAI SABIEDRIBAI DOTS - DOTS
PIC number:	913427661
Project name and acronym:	COVIDemocracy in the Baltics _ COVIDemocracy

EVENT DESCRIPTION			
Event number:	WP8-D87.1		
Event name:	National event in Latvia		
Type:	Discussion		
In situ/online:	in-situ		
Location:	Latvia, Cēsis		
Date(s):	09.06.02023.		
Website(s) (if any):	<a href="https://www.fondsdots.lv/lv/jaunumi/uzsakts-projekts-demokratija-covid-19-pandemijas-laika-baltijas-valstis">https://www.fondsdots.lv/lv/jaunumi/uzsakts-projekts-demokratija-covid-19-pandemijas-laika-baltijas-valstis</a>		
Participants			
Female:	68		
Male:	21		
Non-binary:			
From country 1 [LATVIA]:	1		
From country 2 [name]:			
From country 3 [name]:			
...			
Total number of participants:	89	From total number of countries:	1
Description			
Provide a short description of the event and its activities.			

**Conversation "Freedom of speech - what limits it and what to do about it"**

Traditionally, freedom of speech, its manifestations and restrictions are viewed in the context of the relationship between the individual and the state. The limits of freedom of speech were tested both during the COVID pandemic, when the freedom of assembly was significantly restricted in order to protect public health, and also with the beginning of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, since Latvia's national security has also become acutely important.

Parallel to the relationship between the state power and the individual in the public communication space, the tone and limits of permissible statements are regulated even more intensively by the representatives of society themselves. The fragmented, polarized, impulsive discussion culture of social networks and digital communication strengthens the closure of people in "bubbles" of different opinions and aggressive communication between different representatives of opposing opinions, as well as targeting people whose expressed opinion is unpleasant or unacceptable. People who do not want to be in the tension-filled opinion space choose not to express their opinion or "delete" themselves from social networks.

The purpose of this talk is to identify the challenges of freedom of speech in today's society and how to better deal with them

**Conversation "Freedom of speech - what limits it and what to do about it?"** was led by

*Iveta Kažoka* (<https://festivalslampa.lv/lv/dalibnieki/655>), PROVIDUS director and leading researcher and the speakers were

*Anda Rožukalne*, Public electronic media ombudsman, RSU professor (<https://festivalslampa.lv/lv/dalibnieki/217>),

*Sanita Osipova*, professor of the department of legal theory and history of the faculty of law of the University of Latvia (<https://festivalslampa.lv/lv/dalibnieki/3733>) and

*Māris Zanders*, journalist. Commentator on political processes (<https://festivalslampa.lv/lv/dalibnieki/3932>).

Afterwards Māris Zanders also wrote an article about this topic in one of the main cultural websites satori.lv: <https://satori.lv/article/piekriti-vai-pakluse>

The discussion also had a livestream on festival page:

<https://festivalslampa.lv/lv/programma/pasakumi/2267>

Taking into account that two participants in the discussion were journalists, much was said about the exacerbation of restrictions on journalists' freedom of speech among the Latvian media, where they often face punishments from politicians and supervisory institutions. On the other hand, Sanita Osipova, the former head of the Constitutional Court, spoke about the aspects of freedom of speech in the legal environment and people's everyday life in general. Of course, everyone concluded that the situation has worsened after both the Covid pandemic and the Ukrainian war, which polarized and divided society.

The discussion took place at Conversation festival LAMPA, on one of the festival stages called *Apgaismo*. The festival was in its ninth year and brought together more than 20,000 visitors, 1,070 speakers, more than 400 organizers and 323 events. More about festival you can find here: <https://festivalslampa.lv/lv>

Attendees of the event were ~60% women and 40% men. Taking into account that the event took place at a festival, it is impossible to more precisely identify the affiliation of the visitors. Because the festival takes place in the open air, where people can move freely.

We added note to description of event in the festival program, that this event is supported by EU grant: <https://festivalslampa.lv/lv/video-arhivs/2267>

**HISTORY OF CHANGES**

VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	CHANGE
1.0	01.04.2022	Initial version (new MFF).