

Counter Hate

DIGITAL GUIDE



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



*Key Action 2
Strategic Partnership in the
Field of Youth*

Konsortium:

Latvijas Jauniešu Attīstības Centrs (LIAC), Latvia

OEJAB, Austria

Alternativi International, Bulgaria

Asociación PROJUVEN, Spain





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INTRODUCTION

The project „Counter Hate“ is a long-term, strategic partnership project in the youth field of the Erasmus + Programme. The four strategic partners Latvijas Jauniešu Attīstības Centrs (Latvia), Alternativi International (Bulgaria), Austrian Young Workers Movement (Austria) and Projuven (Spain) were involved in this project.

The number of people confronted with hate speech and insulting statements on the Internet and in Social Media has grown rapidly in recent years. With the implementation of the Internet, the possibilities of human interaction have multiplied, but there has also been an increase in verbal violence whose tone is often extreme and racist.

As digital media play an essential role in the daily lives of many youths and young adults, these are increasingly confronted with hate speech, fake news and extremist content. The Internet often serves as the main source of information, although the evaluation of information and statements on the Internet is not always easy for young people – against this background, digital media are therefore gaining importance in youth work.

This digital guide is aimed at youth and social workers who deal with the topic of digital media and hate speech in their work and whose goal is to strengthen the digital media literacy of young people. For the prevention of hate speech, it is important for young Internet users to be able to understand, analyse, rate and verify explicit and implicit contents and deal critically with digital media – youth work can make an important contribution to this.

The first chapter of this guide demonstrates how increasing digitalisation is accompanied by an increase in digital hate comments and how strong the influence of digital media on youths is. New approaches in the fight against

hate speech on the Internet are presented and the effectiveness of new technologies is discussed.

Chapter two deals with the role of youth work in combating hate speech. Youth work is a form of out-of-school learning that is planned and structured, but is not a formal education offer. It accompanies and supports young people on their way to adult independence and maturity. Youth work strengthens everyday and social skills of youths and is a good possibility to foster the digital media literacy of young people – the basis for the prevention of hate speech.

The last two chapters introduce methods and best practice examples that youth workers can use in their work. The awareness raising for the topic hate speech through information, reflection and dialogue is an important aspect, as well as concrete, practical intervention possibilities.

Enjoy reading!

1. Hate speech in the digital era

The Internet has changed the way we communicate. It has opened up new ways of saying things and new options to say them to more people. Moreover, Social Media platforms provide an inexpensive communication medium that allows anyone to quickly reach millions of users.

Consequently, in these platforms anyone can publish content and anyone interested in the content can obtain it, representing a transformative revolution in our society.

The online space presents new opportunities, challenges but especially threats to young people which are not aware what is online hate speech, of its real potential consequences, of its hateful narratives and who are the online perpetrators of hate speech.



From the other hand, in recent years, migration has put a huge pressure in many European countries and despite the efforts made during these years by governments, private sector, charities and international organisations, third country nationals continue to suffer from various forms of discrimination, especially in terms of employment, social inclusion and education.

However, important to mention is, that in this scenario youth workers and leaders have a role to play because through youth work they can contribute to produce counter-arguments for preventing and countering online hate speech as well as improve the negative impact of fake news and disinformation in creating prejudices and stereotypical images of vulnerable social groups, such as migrants and refugees. Youth workers have to incorporate media literacy skills into their daily work and to explore the phenomenon of fake news, both in deconstructing the fake and comprehending the true.

1.1 How does digitalisation change hate speech?

Hate speech has no particular definition in international Human Rights. It is a term used to describe broad discourse that is extremely negative and constitutes a threat to social peace. According to the Committee of Ministers, hate speech covers all forms of expressions that spread, incite, promote or justify racial hatred, xenophobia, anti-Semitism or other forms of hatred based on intolerance. Along with the development of new forms of media, online hate speech has been brought about. Hate speech in the online space requires further reflection and action on the regulation and new ways for combating it. Unfortunately migrants, asylum seekers and refugees often fall victim to hate speech and one of the biggest challenges is how to

deal with this hateful comments in order that hate does not spill over to real life.

Online hate speech is situated at the intersection of multiple tensions: it is the expression of conflicts between different groups within and across societies, it is a vivid example of how technologies with a transformative potential such as the Internet bring with them both opportunities and challenges and it implies complex balancing between fundamental rights and principles, including freedom of expression and the defence of human dignity and the Human Rights.



In national and international legislation, hate speech refers to expressions that advocate incitement to harm (particularly discrimination, hostility or violence) based upon the target's being identified with a certain social or

demographic group. It may include, but is not limited to speech that advocates, threatens or encourages violent acts. The concept may extend also to expressions that foster a climate of prejudice and intolerance on the assumption that this may fuel targeted discrimination, hostility and violent attacks. However, the Internet's speed and reach makes it difficult for governments to enforce national legislation in the virtual world. Issues around hate speech online bring into clear relief the emergence of private spaces for expression that serve a public function (e.g. Facebook, Twitter) and the challenges that these spaces pose for regulators. Fortunately, some of the companies owning these spaces have become more responsive towards tackling the problem of hate speech online.

In thinking about how to deal with hate speech online, it is also important to note that there are several aspects of digital publication of information and communication that distinguish from traditional forms of publication which may be relevant for thinking about how we might address online hate speech.

For example, one of the most important characteristics of online hate speech is that it can be itinerant. Even when content is removed, it may find expression elsewhere, possibly on the same platform under a different name or on different online spaces. If a website is shut down, it can quickly reopen using a web-hosting service with less stringent regulations or via the reallocation to a country with laws imposing higher threshold for hate speech. The itinerant nature of hate speech also means that poorly formulated thoughts that would have not found public expression and support in the past may now land on spaces where they can be visible to large audiences. Hate speech can stay online for a long time in different formats across multiple platforms, which can be linked repeatedly.

Moreover, the publication is almost instantaneous and a tweet issued by a powerful person can reach the devices of his or her followers within seconds.

There are peculiar challenges unique to online content and its regulation. Those challenges related to its permanence, itinerancy, anonymity and cross-jurisdictional character are among the most complex to address.

However, it is important to mention that with the increasing migration flows to Europe in the past years, European states have experienced significant increase of the use of hate speech towards immigrants and minorities, often blamed to be the cause of current economic and social problems. What began as a moral and humanitarian drama turned into a political one as Europe seemed to lose control of its borders. The refugee crisis peak seems to contribute to the growth of production and distribution of online content. Additional factors to foster online hate speech related to the high number of refugees include the introduction of European quotas for migrant settlement, house allocation and job hiring of refugees seen as unfair if given precedents over local population.

Consequently researchers need to answer questions such as:

- What is the linguistic trace of online hate speech against migrants in user-generated contexts?
- How become comments action-oriented and what do they incite to?
- Are there different levels of intensity in hateful comments?
- What are the speech acts observed?
- What is the role played by online communities and content circulation?
- Who publishes online hateful comments?
- Is hate speech against migrants, culture-related?

The reality is that thousands of people publish hate filled content on Social Media every day, sometime explicitly calling for violent actions against migrant populations and other vulnerable groups.

Frequent forms of racist hate speech against refugees are:

- Contrasting “us” and “them”
- Generalisations (“all refugees are...”) and blanket attributions (e.g. refugee = Muslim)
- Normalisation of discriminatory attitudes (“It’s no wonder that ...”)
- Refugees are made responsible for all kind of social issues: sexism, criminality or housing shortage
- Dehumanisation: equating refugees with insects, parasites or animals
- Anyone who helps refugees is a do-gooder or quite probably a left-wing extremist

According to “GloBall: A tool kit for youth workers working with young migrants, refugees and asylum seekers”, when we speak about hate speech situations, three actors are presented (both offline and online):

The target can be both, an individual as well as a group. Groups or persons with specific characteristics are unfortunately more easily targeted by hate speech than others.

The hate messenger can be someone you know or not, even someone who tries to remain anonymous. The hate messenger can also be a known or public person. Hate speech can be spread occasionally or on a regular basis.

The bystanders are the biggest group in this whole story. Bystanders comprise anybody who witnesses a hate situation or hate message. Bystanders can be friends of the target or the hate messenger, but they can

also be completely disconnected. Besides these persons, also the moderator or creator of a forum (e.g. Facebook group or Twitter account) is a bystander.

The youth worker as a bystander can do several things in order to tackle this content. For example, to counteract the weight of hate speech, it is necessary to create and share empathetic information. Youths have to speak up against hate, otherwise silence and apathy can be taken as acceptance. Report on the platform is also a good way of tackling hate speech. Each social network has its own guidelines on which content is acceptable or not. While there are teams dedicated to verify this information, in many cases it is necessary to report it for it to be seen. For example, Facebook continually checks if there are new vulnerable populations that should be included in their protected categories and on previous occasions, migrants have fit within this group.

1.2 Digitalisation of youth encountering hate speech – digital citizenship and digital literacy

While the Internet offers a stream of information to experience and share, navigating securely in the complex online world can be a demanding task. The informed participation of all citizens in what is known as the digital environment depends on the development of a much broader literacy – the so-called digital literacy.

Digital citizenship is a term that describes how a person should act while using digital technology online. Some experts propose nine elements that comprise digital citizenship: digital access, digital consumerism, digital communication, digital literacy, digital etiquette, digital law, digital rights and responsibilities, digital health and wellness and digital security.

Whatever the composition of digital citizenship may be, it is clear that all users of the Internet have a responsibility and possibly even a duty to act responsibly when using the Internet and communication technologies.



Internet literacy skills and tools are totally relevant and necessary for young people, especially to enable them to identify hate speech and to respond to it. It is necessary that they analyse information critically and are able to check its origin. In addition, youth workers play a crucial role of moderators between young people, society and digital technologies. It is claimed that youth work has the potential to address young peoples' digital literacy needs, which are often omitted at schools or at home.

According to the American Library Association digital literacy "...is the ability to use information and communication technologies to find, evaluate, create and communicate information, requiring both cognitive and technical skills."

A digitally literate person is able to use diverse technologies appropriately and effectively to retrieve information, interpret results and judge the quality of that information. This person understands the relationship between technology, life-long learning, personal privacy and stewardship of information and possesses a variety of skills – technical and cognitive – required to find, understand, evaluate, create and communicate digital information in a wide variety of formats.

In the digital environment, youths must have a place where they can learn about and discuss current challenges posed by hate speech in their communities and societies at large. They have not only to be engaged in dialogue about the topic, but also have to collaboratively work towards creating a campaign to counter hate speech in various forms. Of course, in this last case, a more specific set of competences is needed to create positive messages and online campaigns against hate speech. The content format and tone used, need to reflect the values that the campaign stands for and the most appropriate information for the intended audience. The timing and the choice of social platforms in which the content is shared also requires careful consideration. In addition, with the power of the Internet technologies youths can organise more efficiently and cheaply their online or offline campaigns. Moreover, identifying organisations that share their same causes and invite them to form a network or alliance of organisations, could be a powerful model that has a positive impact on their objectives.

One of the latest issues that has raised concern among intermediaries, governments and end users, are the fake news in the digital era. Fake news is any information that is deliberately or accidentally misinformative or untrue, often published with the intention of misleading the public, damaging an entity or gaining financially. Although fake news are not a new phenomenon, the digital age has caused a spread with greater ease through

Social Media platforms, leading to disastrous effects for organisations and nations around the world, such as causing corporations to lose profit, deepening social divisions along racial or religious lines and hampering the democratic process.



The negative impact of fake news in creating prejudices and stereotypical images of vulnerable social groups, such as migrants and refugees, is more than evident. Consequently, youth workers have to know how to recognize and break down key terms and ideas to understand fake news and media literacy principles. They need to incorporate media literacy skills into their daily work and have to explore the phenomenon of fake news, both in deconstructing the fake and comprehending the true. Young people should also be trained from an early age in media literacy so they can become their

own fact-checkers. Digital literacy and informed citizenship go hand-in-hand. Prior knowledge is one of the main defences against lies and disinformation.



Disinformation is a phenomenon which has infiltrated and grown within the cyber-world. People are affected by misleading content online and this is proven not only by social research but basic statistics with data analytics quantifying just how many thousands of people are liking, sharing and reading false or misleading content. Just like hate speech, disinformation needs to be countered, but counter-narratives alone cannot lessen the influence false news has on audiences. Instead people need to be educated and Social Media companies such as Facebook have to be made accountable for validating misleading or un-credible content which has been allowed on many occasions to appear on trending lists – making the problem even worse.

1.3 Usage of technology to fight against hate speech

Artificial intelligence (AI) is sweeping the tech industry, as new methods for getting computers to recognize patterns and make decisions catches on. With today's AI technology called deep learning, you can get a computer to recognize a cat by training it with lots of pictures of cats, instead of figuring out how to define cat characteristics like two eyes, pointy ears and whiskers.

Using machine learning to slow the spread of hate speech

The power of machine learning is that it allows experts to analyse thousands of tweets and return hate classifications within milliseconds. For example, “We counter hate ” is a human-moderated platform that is continuously finding hate speech for IT experts to counter. The flexibility of their platform allows them to continually adapt their model to constantly evolving terminologies used by hate groups on Social Media. They leverage enterprise-level AI platforms for Natural Language Processing and Image Recognition APIs, so that they are able to interpret messages as they are posted, in near real time. An important step is the training of the algorithm – the so called machine learning. Therefore “We counter hate” need to feed it a stream of hate speech comments found in Social Media to break down and learn from. They use Spredfast, an intelligent social listening platform, to moderate incoming messages and categorise them into streams of hate speech. Those streams are fed on an ongoing basis and linguistic nuances can be detected and be learned.

Platforms like Facebook, YouTube and Twitter are banking on developing artificial intelligence technology to help stopping the spread of hateful speech on their networks. The idea is that complex algorithms that use

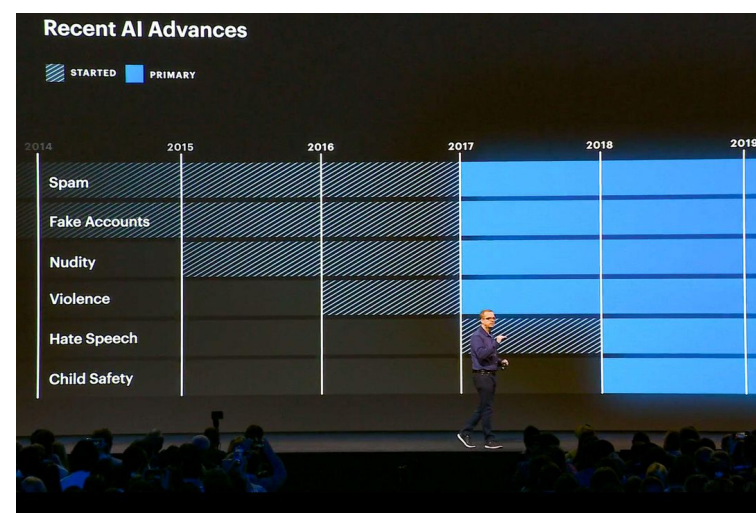
natural language processing will flag racist or violent speech faster and better than human beings possibly can. Doing this effectively is more urgent than ever in light of recent mass shootings and violence linked to hate speech online.

Facebook: New AI technology spots hate speech faster

Facebook's AI engineers have embraced a technology called self-supervised learning, so the social network's technology can adapt faster to challenges like spotting new forms of hate speech. Facebook's AI is improving many problems on the world's largest social network: bullying, hate speech, violence, terrorist propaganda, child nudity, spam, adult content and fake accounts. Facebook already filters out some hate speech, mostly pro-ISIS and Al Qaeda content, through AI programming.

One of the biggest issues in developing AI that can flag and remove hate speech is the fact that so much of communication relies on context and implications specific to the groups that use that language. A phrase may seem neutral to one segment of the population, but be pointedly hurtful to another. Some groups have given harmful implications to once meaningless phrases or symbols — the triple parentheses, for instance — highlighting just how much communication happens outside the literal meanings of spoken (or written) words. To truly solve the problem of hate speech, machine learning will need to advance enough to start identifying those ever-changing, non-verbal cues and understand the context around them. The thorniest Social Media issues are always related to security and privacy. In addition to the already discussed, Facebook is using AI to detect content falling into seven main categories: nudity, graphic violence, terrorism, hate

speech, spam, fake account and suicide prevention. AI helps to identify fake accounts created for malicious purposes and shuts them down instantly. There is a lot to gain from the implementation of an advanced AI filtering system: completely eradicating hate speech and similar hurtful media would result in happier web users and more pleasant online experiences.



But the technology has not quite hit that point yet and there are still legitimate worries about AI's ability to evolve. Moreover, even if technology reaches a point where written words can be filtered easily, there is still the issue of other media types. Content is consumed more and more in the form of photos and videos, so AI would have to be capable of evolving.

1.4 Conclusion

It appears that the fight against perceived online hate speech is beginning to reach a number of concerned parties, from governments to private companies and Internet Service Providers, as well as to a growing number of active organisations and affected individuals. There are also many online communities and individuals fighting against hateful content online on a daily basis alongside more formal organisations. However, this fight necessitates large-scaled actions in order to ensure that online hate speech can be effectively and contextually identified and remedied in the long run and it requires empowerment of users to identify and combat hate speech without blocking legitimate speech and in this way creating more inclusive spaces for expression.

2. Non-formal education and the role of youth work countering hate speech

Youth work is an educational youth programme with the purpose of aiding and enhancing the personal and social development of young people through their voluntary involvement. It is complementary to their formal, academic or vocational education and training and which is provided primarily by voluntary youth work organisations.

WHAT IS YOUTH WORK FOR?

ENABLING
young people to do the things they want to do together and individually

Providing young people with opportunities to **EMANCIPATE** and gain autonomy

Providing young people with healthy and safe opportunities for leisure that they can **ENJOY**



EMPOWERING
young people to change things they think need to be changed in their immediate surroundings and society

Helping young people to **ENGAGE** with power and policy

Providing young people with relevant and engaging non-formal **EDUCATION** opportunities that improve their competencies

Youth work is above all an educational and developmental process, based on young peoples' active and voluntary participation and commitment. Youth work encompasses a broad range of activities (e.g. social, cultural, educational, sports-related and political) carried out with, by and for young people through non-formal and informal learning.

Youth work in Europe is done by many different institutions and organisations and by many different people, individually or in teams. It is very diverse and takes many different forms. Some countries have long-standing traditions in professional youth work (skilled, working with young people through programmes and institutions funded by local and national authorities). Other countries have long existing voluntary structures for youth work (activities provided by volunteer organisations). And in some countries youth work is a part of providing social well-being, with youth practices specific to employment, social inclusion and social assistance.

2.1 Principles of youth work and non-formal education

The purpose of youth work is to support youths and young adults in their personal and social development. The aim is to achieve their full potential and develop important life skills through non-formal educational activities:

- Empowerment of young people
- Equality and inclusion
- Respect for all young people
- Involvement of young people in decision-making
- Partnership
- Voluntary participation

Non-formal education refers to planned, structured programmes and processes of individual and community education for young people designed to enhance a range of skills and competences, which are not part of formal education.



Non-formal education is what happens in places such as youth organisations, sports and theater clubs and community groups where young people meet to work together on projects, play games, discuss, go camping or create music and theater – it is accessible to everyone. Formal, informal and non-formal education are complementary and mutually reinforcing elements of the lifelong learning process.

Non-formal education is an extracurricular learning process that is planned and implemented with the active participation of a facilitator and participants, such as:

- participants are active, they solve problems by “learning by doing” and think creatively
- learning is practical, flexible and based on the real needs of the participants
- the purpose of non-formal education is to support the life of the individual or the community rather than ensure the transfer of individual skills or knowledge
- non-formal education is based on mutual trust and respect and should encourage questions and reflection
- non-formal education is voluntary and is based on individual needs

Through non-formal education, a number of key competences and skills are developed to support the personal and professional development of participants in the educational process. NFE is firstly used as term in a UNESCO’s report in 1947 concerning reforms in developing countries education. At a UNESCO conference in 1967 dedicated to the crisis in world education, the role of non-formal education was discussed broadly. In the 70’s the idea of non-formal education had been developed further especially in Brasil. In 1972 the International Commission for Education published its report “Learning to be: The world education today and tomorrow” which also boosted the non-formal education development.

After this report two terms had established: non-formal education and non-formal learning. In the 80’s in the UK and Wales a national system for professional qualification was developed which also validated the skills and competences acquired outside of formal education. Non-formal learning and non-formal education became quite important for the European Union in the 90’s – 1996 was the “European year of lifelong learning”.

Through the years different methods had been developed within the field of non-formal education:

- communication-based methods: interaction, dialogue, mediation
- activity-based methods: experience, practice, experimentation
- methods based on the social environment: partnership, teamwork, networking
- methods focused on the individual: creativity, discovery, responsibility

2.2 Role of youth work and non-formal education for countering hate speech

Youth work plays a significant role in young peoples’ lives and is an important factor to tackle hate speech trough following ways:

- Raising awareness
- Transforming
- Empowering for action

Raising awareness

One of the main roles of youth work countering hate speech is raising awareness among young people about the issue. In youth settings where hate happens, youth workers are confronted with hateful behaviour and have to manage and challenge the behaviour when it happens – they need plenty of skills and knowledge to tackle the problem and to react correctly. Raising awareness can take various forms such as online and offline campaigns, seminars, training courses, workshops and presentations both for long and short term scale – there could be single events, but of course the more efficient ones will be long term actions. In the context of this strategy the topic is brought up more generally, unlikely the transformation strategy where there is a lot of emotions and personal feelings involved. The young person is usually an observer and the strategy is not oriented that much to share ones personal needs but rather learn from others experience and then self-reflect. Of course group discussions can also be part of the process.

A powerful tool youth workers can use for raising awareness about hateful behaviour is “Human library”. Started as a local action in the year 2000 from a group of young people in Copenhagen, it grew to a powerful and inspiring tool that has been used ever since worldwide with one aim – to depict stereotypes and to fight against any kind of discrimination by bringing people closer. The methodology involves humans being “used as books” and “read” by other humans, based on genuine communication and telling personal stories.

Hateful behaviour is often being adopted by young people due to lack of knowledge and they also do have hardly any contact with people from minority groups (e.g. refugees, Roma, LGBTQ), thus they tend to generalise and have prejudices. But when they get to meet someone from that groups, when they hear personal stories, when they engage in communication and

get human connection, then it becomes harder to judge. Human library humanise these groups – it takes off the label, it takes off the usual “they and we” and leaves place for understanding. This is the first step to a change as it gives the opportunity to put yourself in someone else shoes.



Note: “Human library” is not an easy instrument to be used – it requires a lot of experience and most of all preparation. There are key elements that have to be ensured like the preparation of the people who would be your books, the preparation of the audience and also dealing with security issues. It is essential to create a safe environment and a cozy and comfortable setting to ensure smooth implementation and dialogue.

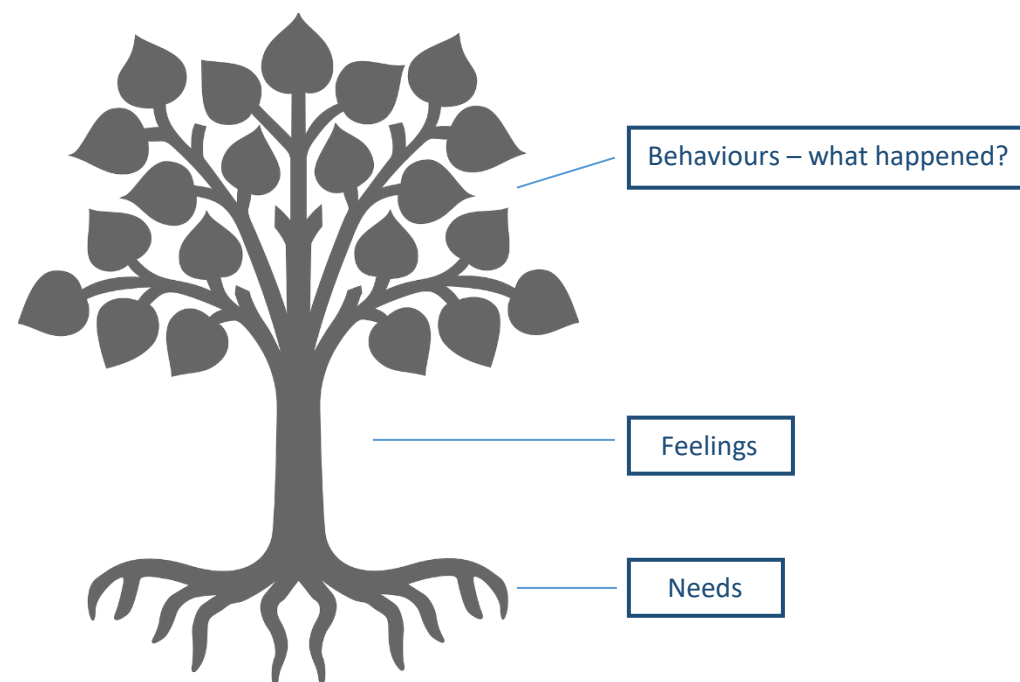
Transformation

Transformation process is the second step after raising awareness – principle basis is that the youth workers need to develop a personal connection with young people to build empathy. Moreover for a transformation process youth workers need to ensure supportive, respectful and inclusive space, where youths feel comfortable and safe. The key to transform hateful behaviours of youths is compassion, empathy and understanding. Youth workers need to create the environment where stereotypes, prejudices and ignorance, which are usually the reasons for hateful behaviour, can be broken. Moreover they have to work with emotions, feelings, understandings, social practices, values and beliefs. A crucial part of the transformative process is working with young people on understanding their own feelings and needs and how these impact on their behaviour.

Transformation is a process, a long a journey where young people connect with themselves and their needs, feelings and core values. In many cases hate speech and hateful behaviour can be seen as a young person acting out of unmet needs that result in those behaviours – behind every feeling is a need. In this way, it allows us to break systematic patterns of responding, away from fixed ideas of “right” and “wrong”.

A very powerful tool in transformation processes, when defining young people's needs, values and feelings, is the “Tree of Needs”. This exercise is a method devised to focus on transformation with young people you work with. It helps young people on recognising their feelings and needs. It is a simple, yet effective way to engage youths in understanding themselves better. The trunk of the tree are the feelings. The roots of the tree represent the needs, which usually are the reasons or the roots of the problem. They are usually answering the question “Why?”. The branches of the tree represent the behaviours or the effects of those needs and feelings. The method is similar to the “Problem Tree” – another analytical tool, often used

in peace education to define causes and effects of a concrete issue in order to formulate your strategies to tackle it. This process leads you into a space in which restorative practices can be used, usually in follow-up sessions.



Note: This is a powerful, emotional exercise for a young person. Do not use the method before you have established an emotional connection and empathy with the young person as one will most probably not open up. Let one decide when he or she is ready to move on talking about feelings and emotions.

Empowering action

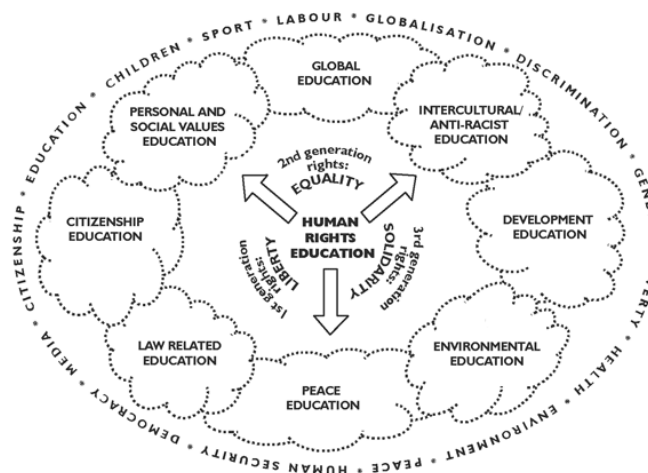
Empowering action is the last step after raising awareness and the transformation strategy. Action empowerment and activism is the last step so it automatically involves the other two approaches. Engaging young people as activists against hate speech needs to start with the increase of general knowledge and awareness. The next step is the analysis and reflection of personal values, feelings and needs and the youths have to understand the need of action. If you like to include young people in the fight against hate, you not only need to educate them, but also to inspire them. Thus, more time needs to be invested in most cases, using various tools to raise awareness, educate, inspire, empower and activate. One of the ways to empower youths to tackle hate speech is to involve them as volunteers in your activities – engage them to help in organising campaigns, make them feel valuable, appreciated, give them a sense of belonging to the cause and make them feel this is their cause.

In order to turn someone into a hate speech and Human Rights activist you need to awaken enthusiasm and have to share the passion and motivation with the young person. Next important step is to ensure networking, thereby the youths can share their experiences and can create and develop new ideas. Moreover, it is very important to ensure effective mentorship – empowering is a process, not a single activity. You can inspire someone with a single motivation speech or action, but it is important to ensure follow-up actions. Thus, effective mentoring is a must in empowering youths to tackle hate – it needs time, resources and experience. The mentor should use effective techniques of coaching, monitor the learning process, ensure the re-empowerment and activate the involvement of the young person into the process.

2.3 Human Rights education

Human Rights education is an essential part of the role of youth work tackling hate speech. It is an instrument of youth workers to effectively engage youths in combating hateful behaviours in all stages – raising awareness, transforming hate and empowering action.

In order to tackle hate, the basic principle is to understand the nature of Human Rights. The European Council defines „Human Rights education“ as "...educational programmes and activities that focus on promoting equality in human dignity, in conjunction with other programmes such as those promoting intercultural learning, participation and empowerment of minorities."



The Human Rights education approach builds knowledge and skills, as well as attitudes and behaviours, to promote and uphold Human Rights. Learning about Human Rights is gaining knowledge and understanding Human Rights

standards, principles and values. It is a process that includes various techniques, tools and activities and the learning and teaching is carried out in a way that respects the rights of both, educators and learners. The learning process has to be consistent with Human Rights values (e.g. participation, freedom of thought and expression) and it has to be considered that the process of learning is as important as the content of the learning process.

In the context of hate speech it is essential for young people to realise and recognize hate speech as violation of Human Rights – nevertheless they have to respect the Human Rights of those who actually use hate speech, because it is crucial when countering hate speech not to answer with more hate but with respect. Human Rights education is empowering individuals to enjoy and exercise their rights and to respect and uphold the rights of others. By developing skills, attitudes and values, the learners apply Human Rights values in their lives and take action, alone or with others, for promoting and defending Human Rights.

Human Rights education requires a lot of experience and field work. To be able to use it as tool to combat hate speech, youth workers need to get a lot of theoretical information and practical experience. For more information and inspiration on Human Rights education, the role of youth work in countering hate speech and practical exercises and methods, have a look at following links:

- Bookmarks – A manual to combat hate speech online by the European Council <https://rm.coe.int/168065dac7>
- We can! Taking action against hate speech through counter and alternative narratives <https://rm.coe.int/wecan-eng-final-23052017-web/168071ba08>
- Compass – Manual for Human Rights education with young people <https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/home>

3. Counter hate methods

Under the influence of social, political, economic and other factors that are most susceptible to destructive influence, radical views and beliefs are more easily formed in the youth environment. Thus, young citizens join the ranks of various organisations that actively use youth in their political interests.

The youth environment, due to its social characteristics and acuity of perception of the environment, is that part of society in which the accumulation and realisation of negative protest potential occurs most quickly.

In recent years, there has been an increase in a number of radical movements that involve young people in their activities. An analysis of data over the past five years shows that the age of four out of five people whose criminal activity has been suppressed is no more than 30 years.

It is even possible to observe the idea of a “clean state” in hate speech and it is clear that behavior motivated by such rhetoric has a strict orientation, aimed in this case against people of a different nationality or religion.

This also mixes with hatred for the existing authorities or governments, which, according to distributors of hate speech, condones the life of the causers of all the troubles of European society, which leads to an even wider dissemination of ideas aimed at hate speech. And these ideas become the foundation for the emergence of interethnic conflicts.

The following significant factors can be identified as the cause of hate speech manifestations in the youth environment:

- aggravation of social tension in the youth environment (characterised by a complex of social problems, including problems

of the level and quality of education, “survival” in the labour market, social inequality etc.)

- the use of a psychological factor for destructive purposes (the aggression inherent in youth psychology is actively used by experienced leaders of radical organisations and political parties to carry out actions of various kinds)
- the use of the Internet for illegal purposes (provides access to a wide audience and propaganda, the ability to post detailed information about goals and objectives, time and place of actions, planned actions)

To solve this problem, including among young people, it is necessary to create a self-reproducing system of ideas, carriers and distribution channels, which can autonomously contribute to the formation of a positive public consciousness that excludes the very possibility of using hate speech to achieve any goals.

One of the goals of the COUNTER HATE project is to change the legal psychology of people and to achieve rejection by the absolute majority of the population of the very idea of the possibility of using hate speech to resolve social, religious, cultural and any other problems and contradictions.

An important step in fighting with hate speech (which can be a prerequisite of hate crime) is to introduce a new strategy and action plan to combat hate speech. The idea is to promote young people a deeper understanding of the harmful effects of rhetoric aimed at inciting hatred, as well as possible ways to counter such manifestations.

Such a strategy can offer various methods of counteracting the factors determining the underlying causes and driving forces of hate propaganda, as well as contain recommendations on combating the negative impact of such rhetoric on the public mood.

This is because hate speech undermines the principles of tolerance, inclusiveness, diversity and the very essence of norms and principles related to the field of Human Rights. In a broader sense, hatred undermines social cohesion and the shared values of European society. Violence can be generated by hate speech, becoming an obstacle to sustainable development, implementation of Human Rights, stability and peace.



Due to the fact that new channels, such as social networks, are available to a wider audience than ever before, everyone should step up actions aimed at counteracting.

In order to provide effective support to efforts to counter hate speech among youth workers, the COUNTER HATE project offers various working methods, including debates and other forms of discussion of this problem for a better understanding of the essence. Increasing the sustainability of public opinion regarding hate speech will play a key role in reducing it.

During the training event of the COUNTER HATE project, which took place in Saulkrasti, Latvia, between 1-7 June 2019, 17 participants from four

countries, namely: Latvia, Austria, Spain and Bulgaria, had a chance to explore some of the methods, which can be used in youth work with other audiences. Since those participants were representing partner organisations, they had an opportunity to share knowledge, skills and competences with their leaders and target groups.



3.1 Countering hate debates

One of the methods in groups can be dedicated to debating on specific statements related to hate speech and countering it. By taking in consideration that the audience can have different points of view, the results

on understanding can be significant since combination of opinions will generate the structure of the issue as well as possible counter hate methods on communication both online and offline.

In E-learning Module 3: “Skills, knowledge and competences for youth workers and volunteers needed to counter hate” you already explored a method called World Café. In this chapter a different method will be described, called “Countering hate debates”, but the topics (issues), mentioned for World Café, can be similar. The idea of the “Countering hate debates” format is that it focuses on relevant and often deeply divisive propositions, emphasizing the development of critical thinking skills, and tolerance for differing viewpoints.

It will help to:

- focus on the core elements of controversial issues
- emphasize tolerance for multiple points of view
- emphasize the development of analytical thinking skills
- instill in participants an appreciation for the value of teamwork
- provide audience with the opportunity to debate many kinds of resolutions concerning counter hate

Rules

The audience is divided in teams of three persons each, and from now on each individual will be named as “debater”. Two teams of three debaters work together and research both sides of one offered issue. Each team is given the opportunity to offer arguments and direct questions to the opposing team. Judges then offer constructive feedback, commenting on logical flaws, insufficient evidence or arguments that debaters may have overlooked. For one topic (issue) two teams are divided on “Pro” and “Con”.



The “Pro” team has the responsibility to define and interpret the solution. Such team should interpret the topic as it would reasonably be interpreted in the public sphere. “Pro” need not necessarily provide a literal interpretation of the solution – rather, the objective of the “Pro” team is to make an adequate case for its interpretation of the solution. To this end, the team must introduce one or more arguments in support of the solution as they have interpreted it and sustain that case throughout the debate.

From other hand, the “Con” team argues against the “Pro” position. The “Con” team may counter the “Pro” team’s interpretation of the solution if they believe it is not reasonable. The “Con” team may challenge any aspect of the “Pro” team’s case and may offer a case of its own. For example, it may challenge the interpretation of the solution, the factual and analytical foundations of the case or the underlying assumptions of the “Pro” ’s claims. “Pro” and “Con” teams have up to one and half hour for preparations and research on the issue. After that they are invited to take their places on stage.

Restrictions

- No research is permitted. Topic research must be completed prior to the beginning of a debate. Once the debate begins, the teams may not conduct research via the Internet nor through electronic or other means.
- No outside assistance is permitted. No outside person(s) may conduct research during the debate and provide information directly or indirectly to the debaters. Debaters, however, are allowed to consult whatever research materials they have brought with them to the debate.
- Debaters should be able to provide sources for direct citations. When debaters refer to any public information, they should be prepared to provide, upon request, complete source documentation to the opposing team and to the judge. A team’s documentation of cited material must be complete enough for the opposing team and the judge to locate the information on their own. Ordinarily, such

documentation would include the name of an author (if any), the name and date of a publication (and a page number, if available) or the URL of a website.

- Debaters should practice intellectual honesty. They should cite arguments and statistics truthfully and never fabricate sources or data.
- The debate should be approached as a team activity. Each debate team is composed of three persons who will speak in the roles they announce at the start of the debate. Debaters may change their role in the debate from round to round.

Format

The “Pro” and the “Con” teams will have equal time to present their arguments. The debate is composed of ten parts. Six of these consist of speeches – that is, uninterrupted presentations by a designated debater. The remaining four consist of a series of questions and answers involving one debater from each side.

Timing of countering hate debates

ORDER	TIME	DEBATER
1 st “Pro” speech	6 minutes	1 “Pro”
1 st “Con” question-answer	3 minutes	1 “Pro” answers / 3 “Con” asks
1 st “Con” speech	6 minutes	1 “Con”
1 st “Pro” question-answer	3 minutes	1 “Con” answers / 3 “Pro” asks
2 nd “Pro” rebuttal	5 minutes	2 “Pro”
2 nd “Con” question-answer	3 minutes	2 “Pro” answers / 1 “Con” asks
2 nd “Con” rebuttal	5 minutes	2 “Con”
2 nd “Pro” question-answer	3 minutes	2 “Con” answers / 1 “Pro” asks
3 rd “Pro” rebuttal	5 minutes	3 “Pro”
3 rd “Con” rebuttal	5 minutes	3 “Con”

After all speeches and questions the judges can evaluate the outcome together with the audience. What is worth to be mentioned, judges should be especially wary of debaters introducing new arguments at the point of the 3rd rebuttal, since, for example, the “Pro” team has no chance to respond after 3rd “Con” rebuttal, so a new argument is especially unfair. The judge should ignore any new arguments that are introduced.

Topic examples for countering hate debates

- Islamic practices need to be secularised to be accepted in Western societies
- Veiling is incompatible with Western values and local rules
- The Islam threatens European traditions
- A process of radicalisation of Muslims is underway in European cities
- Islam is (and Muslims are) a problem for Western societies
- Islamic religion legitimates extreme forms of women oppression
- Demographic threat and proselytisation (denouncing the alleged increase of the number of Muslim individuals in European countries and the supposed consequent spread of Islamic religion at the expense of the state)
- Muslims can be a threat because of potential terrorism
- Islam is a threat to our European christian civilisation
- Migration leading to Islamization of Europe is generated by European Union, liberals, left parties and George Soros
- Progressing Islamization through migration, which is an occupation of Europe and a destruction of our culture
- Muslim terrorists are arriving with the migration flow as migration is generated by ISIS
- Islam is an alien religion and culture (for Europeans)



As recommendation to you, offer to discuss the activity with the whole group after all teams have finished their presentations and debates. Since the division in teams was blinded, they can experience an uncomfortable situation by defending the opposite point of view than their own. Explanation can be provided by judges.

3.2 Countering hate online

To express the need of fight against hate speech online, one of the methods can be through role-playing, which simulates the operation of one of the most popular social networks, Facebook, trying to bring out some dynamics of violence developing on social networks.

This activity is an active, participated and creative instrument that shows the nature of social networks, Facebook in particular, and make you reflect on how everything that we publish on the social community is absorbed by the virtual world, becoming available to people who can use it as they want. Cyber-bullies, instigators and fakers can easily access to our profiles, comment photos or posts or videos that may harm our image and our credibility in the real world. "Like", innocent comments and sharing accelerate and enhance the cyber-bullies' activity, making the online spread of pictures, words or videos uncontrollable. First it goes on Internet, then offline and violence increases easily.

Format

Participants are given a sheet each one, markers, magazines and newspapers from which they can crop images, articles or words. With the material made available, everyone must first build their own profile and their own page, with name and surname (real or fake), photos, comments, articles representative of themselves or their mood. Once this first phase is done, each one, in silence and with the help of sticky notes, comments on the pages of the other participants engaging communicative dynamics. During this second phase, some of the participants, to whom had been previously and secretly assigned a specific role (by the trainers) will go around their mate's profiles to post and comment depending on the task they have been previously assigned.

It is important to carefully choose the subjects to assign the specific roles which we have mentioned above. The roles can be assigned for affinity or opposition between the role and the personality of the person who will interpret it, depending on the dynamics that you are interested in developing in the group.

The debriefing focuses on an initial analysis of the different pages. In order to facilitate this time of sharing and reflection, the conductor can ask participants if something particular happened during the activity and if something on their page made them feel uncomfortable or embarrassed. All are invited to express their thoughts and read comments posted on their pages, but no one is forced to do it. The conductor must take care to point out that peoples' behavior may result from the role they had to play, therefore the participants will be invited to explain their actions and their comments left.



Then follows a discussion on situations that each one may have experienced in reality, on any cases of hate in the Internet and Social Media which they attended and the role they have played in that situation (as actors or spectators): "Have you ever witnessed this type of situations?"; "Have you

ever played the role assigned to you?"; "Do you recognize yourself in some other role described here?"; "How did you behave?"; "Were you satisfied with the behaviour that you were keeping in that situation?".

As for materials for this activity, you will need A4 sheets, markers, magazines, scissors, glue and sticky notes.

Outcomes

Thanks to the dynamism of this activity and the opportunity to give space to the imagination, youths have the chance to think together about the dynamics that are developed online and compare on the opinions they have (sometimes even contrasting), by gaining the opportunity to experience the psychology of the digital victims. Furthermore youths get to know the security measures given by Facebook and other social networks and can discuss them.

Participants

- Emphasize on how stereotypical behaviour towards disadvantaged groups such as migrants and refugees are being cultivated through social networks supported by the net
- Realise the connection and the action-reaction process between virtual and real world, always in correlation with the topic
- Deepen their knowledge on the notions of cyber-bullying, digital victims and their psychology and the indirect violence applied by social networks and the Internet
- Be aware of the security measures given by Facebook and other social networks

3.3 Countering hate through involvement

This method will be effective if you directly involve refugees and migrants in your activities. Anyway, it also can be used at any environment. This activity can be used to empower the youngsters to take part in their community as real problem solvers.

The main goal is to empower young people in order to define and analyse a community issue, to discover the targets group and their needs and to design and create sustainable solutions and action plans.

Format

Participants will be divided in five groups. Each group consists of three Europeans and one refugee or migrant. Each group has to make a solution plan concerning the topic: "The integration of refugees and migrants in modern European societies." After sixty minutes work, the groups will present their solution plans (10 minutes presentation for each group) and then answer to some questions.

Outcomes

- Participants will learn how to define and analyse a community issue, how to discover the target group and their needs and how to design and create sustainable solutions
- Participants will broaden their theoretical knowledge and practical skills concerning the notions of citizenship, leadership and active participation
- Participants will work on their presentation skills

Involvement of refugees or migrants in real discussion can highlight their ideas, abilities and willing to become an active part of the society. It can be the start point in integration.

Beside the above-mentioned methods, there are many others. As final recommendation, please read COMPASS (Manual for Human Rights education with young people) where the most relevant methods will be provided.

4. Best practice

Digital media play a very important role in the daily lives of youths and young adults. For example, 97% of all German adolescents aged between 12 and 19 have a smartphone (JIM Study 2018) and thus have access to the Internet and various digital Social Media channels such as Facebook, WhatsApp or Twitter.

The Internet often serves as the main source of information, and the evaluation of information and statements on the Internet is not always easy for young people. Young people in the Internet are increasingly confronted with hate speech, misinformation and extremist content. Against this background, digital media are also gaining importance in youth work – these can be used both as a means of communication, but also as an organisational instrument and as a topic for discussion and work.

Basically, two approaches against hate speech can be distinguished:

First, an educational and sociopolitical approach, focusing on the training of digital media literacy and, subsequently, the prevention of hate speech. Since hate speech is difficult to recognize in individual words and often dependent on context, the first task in the fight against hate speech is to identify it, if one encounters it. Sensitisation through information, reflection and dialogue is necessary, especially for young people. A fundamental aspect is the training of digital media literacy, which contributes to the prevention of hate speech. This includes being able to understand, analyse, evaluate and verify explicit and implicit content as well as the ability to use digital media responsibly and critically.



The second approach involves concrete, practical intervention options. The focus is on the promotion of one's own ability to act and the development of strategies against hate speech. According to the German Amadeu Antonio Foundation, whose goal is to strengthen a democratic civil society and to combat right-wing extremism, racism and anti-Semitism, there are following concrete responses to hate speech:

- **Recognition** – Hate speech can be direct or indirect. Not every comment is immediately recognisable as a hate commentary. To be active against hate speech means first of all to recognize it.
- **Contradiction** – Many people read the comments in Social Media, even without being active themselves. As a result, discrimination continues, is consolidated and shared. Hate comments can be contradicted in various ways by means of counter speech, this can

be e.g. by means of argumentation, clarification, confrontation, humor or irony.

- **Support** – The aim of counter speech is the visualisation of a democratic counter-public. It may be useful to contact friends, co-commentators or initiatives to become active. As a rule, participation in debates must take into account your own privacy settings and information that is visible on your personal profile.
- **Documentation** – Many comments in social networks can be criminally relevant. If misanthropic, discriminatory or racist statements become visible, they should be documented with screenshots.
- **Reporting** – Most social networks provide reporting mechanisms for comments that violate community standards. In just a few clicks, offensive and discriminatory comments and posts can be reported to social networks for review.
- **Prosecution** – It is possible to report an offence to the police (also anonymously), e.g. at the nearest police station.

4.1 Best practice examples

Barometer of Hate

This method focuses on raising awareness of hate speech. The aim is a common discussion about what hate speech is and how to recognize it.

For this method, a line is stuck with adhesive tape to the floor. At the end of this line a sign saying "0% hate speech" and on the other side a sign saying "100% hate speech" is put. The next step is to explain the participants that

this line symbolises a scale to rank statements from the Internet according to the topic of hate speech.

Possible statements
All refugees have expensive mobile phones.
She has been forced to wear a headscarf.
We don't want strangers in our country.
I want a new mobile phone – in my next life I become a refugee.
Homosexuality can be healed.
No more migration!
A woman's place is in the home.
Our country gets islamicized.
Girls are bad in computer games.

Afterwards, the participants are divided into teams of two and each team receives a piece of paper with a statement that they are supposed to put face down along the barometer. The teams should each consider which criteria were relevant for the decision to which position at the barometer the comment was placed. Thereafter, the statements are uncovered in front of the group and their positions are discussed. The goal is to recognize and analyse different dimensions, intentions and evaluation criteria of hatred on the Internet.

Memes

As already mentioned counter speech is a good way to react to hate comments on the Internet. In online debates it is useful to response to hate speech with actively opposed content. Hatred and devaluation on the Internet should not remain unchallenged, but be commentated and invalidated with arguments and attitude. A good way to do that is humor and satire. Humor distracts and can thus influence the dynamics of a debate and weaken a heated discussion.



A humorous way to respond to hate speech are so-called memes. Memes are available in different variations, they are pictures, videos or texts that are combined with a caption and thus get a new meaning. Usually, memes are

funny or parodying, but they can also be used as a means of communication to express an opinion or point of view on a topic.

Although memes do not replace a factual discussion, in which an attempt is made by means of arguments and facts to counter hate speech, they humorously take a clear stance on a subject and the absurdity of debates can be shown. Memes can be generated relatively easily by so-called "memes generators" (e.g. makeameme.org, imgflip.com, kapwing.com) on the Internet – though it is important to use copyright-free images (e.g. from pixabay.com).

Teenagers can create their own memes and deal creatively and independently with the topic of hate speech or counter speech. The young people should experience their self-efficacy in order to gain the courage to publicly participate in a peaceful and tolerant, respectful and solidarity-based social interaction.

Fishbowl

In this discussion method, the participants should discuss common hate speech comments and develop their own strategies.

At the beginning, the participants will receive two notes on which they write down negative allegations or hate comments they have heard about specific groups of people, which they would like to discuss. It is important that it does not have to be the personal opinion, it is about finding ways to react to hate comments. The notes are collected anonymously in a box. Then two circles are formed with chairs: a small chair circle in the middle (three to six armchairs) and around the small circle on the outside, a larger outer circle.

The participants may sit on the chairs, whereby only the persons in the inner circle may discuss, the persons in the outer circle have an observer function.

If somebody from the outer circle wants to participate in the discussion, he or she can do that, but he or she has to change place with a person from the inner circle. So if you want to take part in the conversation, you should come forward and lightly tap someone on the shoulder and change the place with this person. The original discussion participant becomes an observer.

After the procedure has been explained and all seats have been taken, a volunteer is asked to take a statement from the box and to begin the discussion. The topic is discussed until it is exhausted and a new topic can be pulled out of the box.

After the discussion, the group should have the time for a reflection, whereby the following questions can be helpful:

- Has anyone figured out something he or she did not know before?
- Has anyone changed their mind about a particular group or topic?
- After this session, do the participants feel that they can better counter to negative comments in a discussion (online or offline)?
Why or why not?
- How can participants participate in similar discussions on the Internet?
- What can one do if one has doubts about a belief or is uncertain?

App "KonterBUNT"

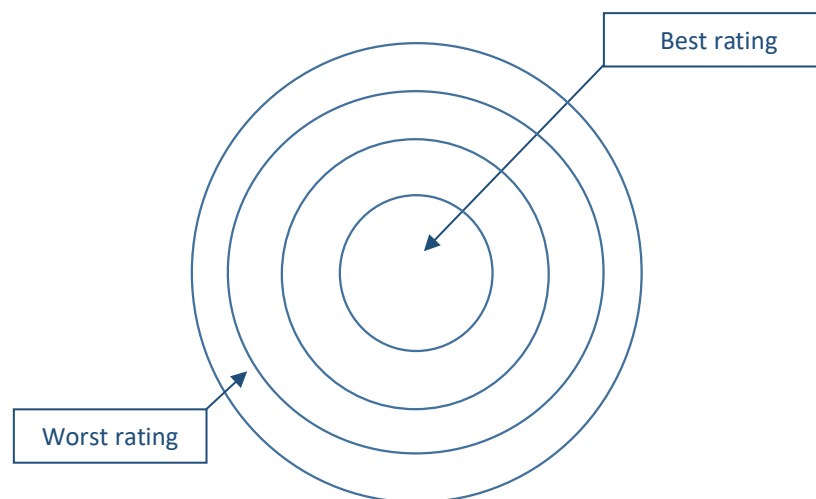
Digital media fulfill important functions in the everyday life of adolescents. For the work with young people, this creates great potential. In particular apps are providing a sensible opportunity to playfully convey social skills and integrate meaningful content into games or interesting applications that are fun for young people.



With the app "KonterBUNT" developed from the National Center for Political Education of Saxonia-Anhalt, youths can learn helpful strategies against hate slogans. The app contains suggestions for good arguments against slogans as well as a strategy guide. In a mini-game you can try different reactions to slogans directly in the app. The app is based on a playful examination of prejudice and argumentation strategies and is available free of charge in the app stores of Google and Apple.

Circle of action

The purpose of this method is to work out and reflect concrete response possibilities on hate speech. Participants will be presented with different examples of hate speech. Afterwards, small groups of four to six people are formed, who work out and discuss possible responses to hate speech. Then the whole group comes together again and the different options that have been developed are collected on a flipchart, double entries will not be written down again. The participants receive two red and three green sticky dots each and mark on the flipchart those reactions which they prefer (green) and those which they would not use (red).



After this another flipchart titled "What to do if ...?" is presented. It shows an empty "circle" of four rings (see figure) – in the outermost ring those reactions are entered which were rated worst by the participants, in the

innermost rings those which were rated best. In the second and third circles are the comments which aroused shared opinions.

Through this visual representation of the results, different response possibilities to hate speech are shown and these can now be reflected together in the group.

Fact-check

This method, which can be found in the publication "Bookmarks – A manual for combating hate speech online through Human Rights education" of the Council of Europe, deals with the use of the Internet as a source of information and should encourage the participants to rethink their own behaviour on the Internet.

Participants will be presented with the following scenario:

After a series of homophobic attacks on young homosexuals – especially on websites and in videos – and intense lobbying by interest groups, a debate on this topic should take place in Parliament. The government has put forward a legislative proposal to provide budgetary funds for education against homophobic attitudes and for the support of young homosexuals. The biggest opposition party is against the new law.

Groups of four people are formed – one part of the groups will search arguments for the ruling party and the other part arguments for the members of the opposition. In each group of four persons, two persons work as researchers and two as observers who observe the methodology of the researchers. The participants have thirty minutes for their research.

The first twenty minutes should be used to search for relevant information and the remaining ten minutes to agree on the main points to be presented in the subsequent presentation. After the Internet research, another ten minutes are provided for the observers to give their group feedback on their key observations. Afterwards the whole group comes together and the research results as well as the results of the observers are presented by the individual groups.



In the follow-up, the participants should reflect on how they searched for information on the Internet, whether the research was influenced by it, which result one wants to find and how one reacts to information whose credibility is questionable.

The following questions can help:

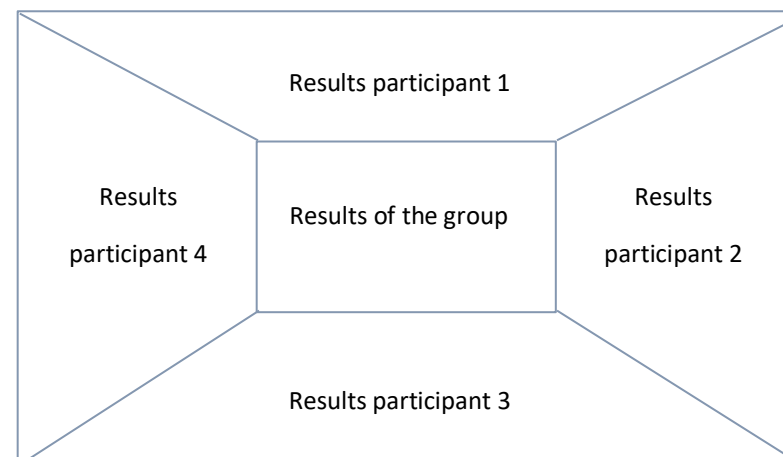
- Which websites were used as an information source?
- Which search methods and keywords were used?
- How was the trustworthiness of the websites or the truth of the information assessed?
- How much did the researched information differ?
- How is it possible to check if a website is reliable or if you can trust information?

Placemat

In the preparatory phase, the participants split into small groups of four people each. Each group receives a sheet of paper (at least in A3 format or larger). A field for the group results is recorded on the paper in the center and one field per group member on the outer areas (see figure). The four participants sit around a table on each table side around the poster.

Afterwards, different examples of hate speech will be presented and the participants will jointly select an example that they would like to work on. In the first work phase, everyone in the small group works on their own and thinks about the different possibilities to react and to respond to the hate commentary. The answers are written into the respective outer field, which is intended for the individual results.

When all results have been recorded, the poster is rotated clockwise so that everyone can read the notes of the other group members. This is repeated until everyone sits back in front of the own notes.



Now that everyone knows the notes of the other group members, the small group should collectively decide which result should be written in the center field, agreeing on the one answer they think is the most appropriate one. Afterwards all groups will explain their answers (whereby the poster can be included in the presentation) and reflect together the different results.

4.2 Best practice examples and youth work

The aim of youth work is to contribute to the development of young people in order to develop their full potential and to empower them to self-determination and to encourage social co-responsibility. Youth work usually refers to non-formal education offers. Children and adolescents use digital media on a daily basis and therefore they are an important topic in youth work.

The presented best-practice examples are all suitable for the use in youth work and follow an educational and socio-political approach on one hand, but also suggest concrete action options on the other hand. As a central approach in dealing with hate speech counter speech plays a significant role. As the examples above show, it is important for young people to independently and creatively engage with the learned content and thus experience their self-efficacy and train their digital media literacy.

CONCLUSION

In this guide possible measures against hate speech and their implementation in youth work were discussed. The goal was to identify best practice examples that youth and social workers can adapt and apply in their daily work to foster young peoples' digital media literacy and to contribute to the prevention of hate speech.

There are two different approaches to tackle hate comments on the Internet: first an educational and socio-political approach that focuses on raising awareness of the issue and fostering digital media literacy. The second approach involves concrete, practical intervention options. The focus is on the promotion of one's own ability to act – this includes the contradiction, documentation, reporting, but also the prosecuting of hate speech.

Besides, there are also more and more efforts through the jurisdiction to act against hate comments. For example, in Germany in 2017, the Network Enforcement Act was enacted, obliging operators of for-profit social networks to delete "manifestly criminal content" within 24 hours of receiving a complaint; non-observance will be fined with up to 50 million Euros.

In October 2019, the European Court of Justice also decided that Facebook can not only be forced to look for "verbatim" statements in insulting and unlawful comments, but also for equivalent remarks. In the opinion of the court, online networks must delete or block such insults if they are required to do so by the courts. "Equivalent" comments, on the other hand, should be similar enough that they can be identified and filtered out using "automated techniques and means of research". This ruling has led to different reactions – privacy advocates see a success for the protection of the personality right, Human Rights organizations criticise a possible curtailment of the right to freedom of expression and fear that satirical or journalistic comments on hate speech could fall victim to automated filters.

In view of the rapid changes that our society is facing as a result of digitalisation, the promotion of the media and Internet literacy of children and adolescents is essential. The Internet should be primarily a tool for communication, solidarity and expression, but it can not be prevented from being used to disseminate hate comments, extremist content and fake news. Young people sensitised to this issue and using digital media with care, can make an important contribution to curbing hate speech on the Internet and to actively advocate for the observance of Human Rights.

Awareness raising among young people for the topic hate speech is an important contribution to combat hate, racism, sexism and discrimination in the Internet. Young people should be strengthened in their commitment to democracy and Human Rights – this is the first step to make the Internet a friendlier place in the future.

ANNEX

Sources

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