

# PREVENTING HATE SPEECH ONLINE

MATERIALS FOR TEACHERS

BHAVE

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Project “BEHAVE – SEE Beyond Hate: Learning and Acting to Counter Hate Speech Online in South East Europe”

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# INTRODUCTION

This publication is developed with the idea to support secondary school teachers and school staff to better understand the phenomenon of hate speech and hate speech online, to become familiar with crucial terms, definitions and legislation in order to address this growing phenomenon with students, colleagues and parents. It is also equipped with developed teaching units, school projects and ideas to be further developed and implement in classrooms and schools.

The publication is the result of joint international work of experts in hate speech, media literacy and education experts, its concept was piloted, and materials consulted on a training with teachers from Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia.

With this publication we want to:

- Inform teachers about key international and national legislation regarding hate speech online,
- Help teachers recognize key actors dealing with hate speech in their countries and recall their specific expertise (specific social networks, Ombudsperson, CSOs, police)
- Recognize hate speech as discriminatory speech and as potential basis for hate crime
- Deconstruct hate speech and distinguish fake news
- Identify and recognize media, social groups and channels which are spreading hate speech online
- Help them to analyse and interpret the imbalance of power related to hate speech
- Empower teachers to react on hate speech and encourage other colleagues and students to react
- Formulate and to plan activities for preventing and solving emerging hate speech in their classroom and school

Thanks to all teachers who participated in the training and the consultations and gave us very useful feedback. Thanks to: Renata Boštjan, Martina Lemaić, Violeta Kecman, Inja Dorić Horvat, Đurđica Radić, Jasminka Lisac, Karmen Novak, Mladen Šljivović, Branka Bubanj, Milena Vojnović, Mirko Marković, Tamara Janković and Ante Babačić.

# ABOUT HATE SPEECH

(...) the term “hate speech” shall be understood as covering all forms of expression which spread, incite, promote or justify racial hatred, xenophobia, antisemitism or other forms of hatred based on intolerance, including: intolerance expressed by aggressive nationalism and ethnocentrism, discrimination and hostility against minorities, migrants and people of immigrant origin.

Council of Europe, Committee of Ministers, Recommendation No. (97) 20

## 2.1. WHAT IS HATE SPEECH?

There are numerous understandings and definitions of what hate speech constitutes and how it affects its victims. From derogatory phrases, inflammable content, incitement to violence, discriminatory or any other speech containing harmful content for the social cohesion, we witness it on social media, in comments to articles, in the form of graffiti, in chants and slogans of hooligans and extreme groups.

In this publication, we will focus on broad definitions given by international bodies and organizations that are commonly used to define this abuse of the freedom of speech.

Hate speech is an expression of discriminatory interaction and behaviour towards a person based upon that person’s personality trait(s). It is well known that hate speech represents „any kind of communication in speech, writing or behaviour.”<sup>1</sup>

“Hate speech entails the advocacy, promotion or incitement of the denigration, hatred or vilification of a person or group of persons, as well any harassment, insult, negative stereotyping, stigmatization or threat of such person or persons and any justification of all these forms of expression – that is based on a non-exhaustive list of personal characteristics or status that includes “race”, colour, language, religion or belief, nationality or national or ethnic origin, as well as descent, age, disability, sex, gender, gender identity and sexual orientation.”<sup>2</sup>

1 UN. (2019). United Nations Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech. Available at: <https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/UN%20Strategy%20and%20Plan%20of%20Action%20on%20Hate%20Speech%2018%20June%20SYNOPSIS.pdf>.

2 European Commission against Racism and Intolerance. (2016). ECRI General Policy Recommendation no. 15 on Combating Hate Speech. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/ecri-general-policy-recommendation-no-15-on-combating-hate-speech/16808b5b01>.

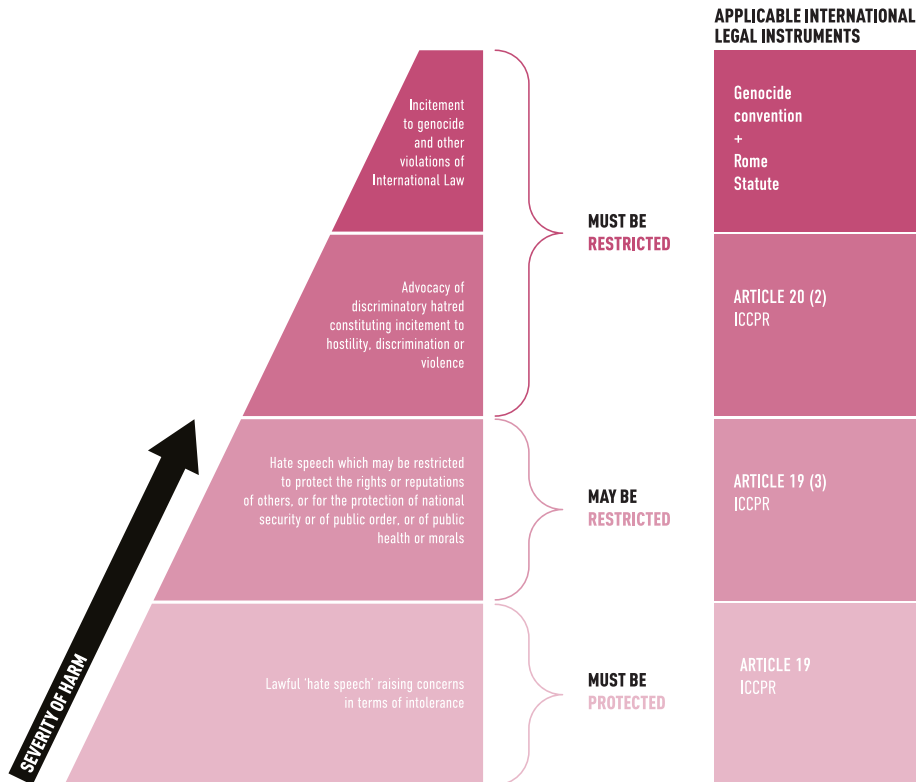


Table 1. The 'Hate Speech Pyramid' by Article 19.<sup>3</sup>

Not every hate speech is “the” hate speech in a criminal sense and not all is equally dangerous for social stability. In the analysis of the danger and harm these manners of speech can have on our society, international mechanisms come in handy. One of such mechanisms is the Rabat Action Plan<sup>4</sup> by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UN Human Rights OHCHR)<sup>5</sup> that explains the possible harm in four levels.

<sup>3</sup> Article 19. (2015). 'Hate Speech' Explained A Toolkit. Available at: <https://www.article19.org/data/files/medialibrary/38231/'Hate-Speech'-Explained---A-Toolkit-%282015-Edition%29.pdf> (page 19).

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Opinion/SeminarRabat/Rabat\\_draft\\_outcome.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Opinion/SeminarRabat/Rabat_draft_outcome.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/pages/home.aspx>.

On the bottom of the pyramid constructed for easier understanding is the “lawful hate speech” that raises concerns in the society, but it is within the frame of permissibility and is protected by the freedom of expression. These are qualifications of persons and groups based on prejudices, for example.

Second level is the kind of speech that may be restricted for the sake of protection of others’ rights, public order, national security and other public needs. In both of these levels, international mechanism controlling these two levels is the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights – ICCPR, Art. 19.<sup>6</sup>

Third level or form of speech is the one advocating for discrimination and that represents incitement to hostilities, violence and hatred and as such, needs to be restricted. Art. 20 of the ICCPR speaks of these situations.

Beyond this category is only incitement to genocide and other infringements of international law, of which the Rome Statute of International criminal tribunal from 1998<sup>7</sup> or UN Convention on genocide from 1948<sup>8</sup> speak of.

Hate speech is not the only form of discriminatory behaviour towards others; ignoring someone, violence, joining for the purpose of exercising discrimination, and genocide are also ways of marginalizing the other. The prevalence of hate speech in one society is an indicator of how unhealthy that particular society is; the society in which different groups of people, even though they live together, are not equal, because of the fear of the other, the “unknown and different” group. When the source of a society’s hate speech are the people in power, hate speech very often becomes a way of manipulating citizens in favour of some malignant political or individual interests.

A society in which hate speech is used as a tool or is presented as a legitimate opinion is a society where prejudices, or even discriminatory behaviours towards others are being legitimized. Words are a powerful tool, and persuasive speakers can, with their intolerant discourse, induce horrible behaviour or even criminal acts towards others. Because of that, it is necessary to work on hate speech prevention even in those societies where hate speech is not present in a large extent; but in those societies in which hate speech is a considerable problem, it is crucial to

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6 The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1976) Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx>

7 International Criminal Court (2002) Available at: <https://www.icc-cpi.int/resource-library/documents/rs-eng.pdf>.

8 United Nations. Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1951) Available at: [https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/atrocities-crimes/Doc.1\\_Convention%20on%20the%20Prevention%20and%20Punishment%20of%20the%20Crime%20of%20Genocide.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/atrocities-crimes/Doc.1_Convention%20on%20the%20Prevention%20and%20Punishment%20of%20the%20Crime%20of%20Genocide.pdf).

stress the importance of sanctioning these acts, as well as to educate the youth about the harm and consequences of hate speech. The assumption is that when these preconditions are met, youth will be able to strongly condemn these acts and will know whom to address for support, help and sanctioning.

It is clear that hate speech and hate crime can only be tackled through joint efforts and cooperation of the whole society by preventive mechanisms such as education and awareness-raising, as well as by reactive ones such as legal sanctions.

Therefore, in theory as well as in practice, there are several institutions crucial for combating hate speech: positive legislation, media and the educational system.

## 2.2. WHAT DOES THE LAW SAY?

In our societies, hate speech is forbidden by laws, and the equality of all people is guaranteed by constitutions. Sanctions for hate speech, as well as for other acts of direct or indirect discrimination of individuals or groups, are provided.

On the European level, some of the most important international documents are prohibiting discrimination. For example, the **European Convention on Human Rights** obliges all **Council of Europe** member states to protect basic human rights and fundamental freedoms without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status. The Convention also established the European Court of Human Rights that hears applications alleging that a contracting state has breached the human rights provisions set out in the Convention and its protocols. Regarding the hate speech issue, the Court is usually dealing with cases of alleged violation of the freedom of expression in relation to hate speech.

One of the most visible institutions dealing with hate speech on the European level is also the **European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)**, as a unique human rights monitoring body of the Council of Europe (CoE)<sup>9</sup> which specialises in questions relating to the fight against racism, discrimination (on grounds of “race”, ethnic/national origin, colour, citizenship, religion, language, sexual orientation and gender identity), xenophobia, antisemitism and intolerance in Europe. Its General Policy Recommendation on Combating Hate Speech can be understood as one of the basic documents defining hate speech in Europe and giving recommendations regarding combating it.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> The Council of Europe. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal>

<sup>10</sup> Available at: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-commission-against-racism-and-intolerance>.



To get acquainted with the recommendations given to each state by ECRI, visit our countries' profiles on ECRI's web page on monitoring cycles:

[Fifth report on Slovenia](#) (adopted on 3 April 2019 / published on 5 June 2019),<sup>11</sup>

[Fifth report on Croatia](#) (adopted on 21 March 2018 / published on 15 May 2018)<sup>12</sup> and

[Third report on Serbia](#) (adopted on 22 March 2017 / published on 1 May 2017).<sup>13</sup>

However, Council of Europe does not have the power of legislation, it can only propose recommendations to CoE member states, but it is up to their good will to implement them. Our three countries – Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia are bonded with the European Union, Slovenia and Croatia being Member States and Serbia having a candidate status with open negotiations. All three countries have ratified important EU directives regarding the prohibition of discrimination, racism and xenophobia.

For the purpose of this publication, we will focus our attention on the **Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA** of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law.<sup>14</sup>

This Directive says that each Member State will ensure that certain intentional conduct is punishable by the Criminal Code of the Member States. These intentional conducts include:

- Public incitement to violence or hatred directed against a group of persons or a member of such a group defined by reference to race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin;
- Public dissemination of pamphlets, pictures or other material that are inciting violence or hatred based on the above-mentioned characteristics;
- Public condoning, denying or grossly trivialising crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes<sup>15</sup>, directed against a group of persons or a member of such a group defined by reference to race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin when the conduct is carried out in a manner likely to incite to violence or hatred against such a group or a member of such a group;

11 European Commission against Racism and Intolerance. (2019). Fifth report on Slovenia (adopted on 3 April 2019 / published on 5 June 2019). Available in English at: <https://rm.coe.int/fifth-report-on-slovenia/168094cb00> and in Slovenian at: <https://rm.coe.int/fifth-report-on-slovenia-slovenian-translation-/168094caff>.

12 European Commission against Racism and Intolerance. (2018). Fifth report on Croatia (adopted on 21 March 2018 / published on 15 May 2018). Available in English at: <https://rm.coe.int/fifth-report-on-croatia/16808b57be> and in Croatian at: <https://rm.coe.int/fifth-report-on-croatia-croatian-translation-/16808b57c0>.

13 European Commission against Racism and Intolerance. (2017). Third report on Serbia (adopted on 22 March 2017 / published on 1 May 2017). Available in English at: <https://rm.coe.int/third-report-on-serbia/16808b5bf4> and in Serbian at: <https://rm.coe.int/third-report-on-serbia-serbian-translation-/16808b5bf6>.

14 Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/ALL/?uri=CELEX%3A32008F0913>.

15 As defined in Articles 6, 7 and 8 of the Statute of the International Criminal Court.

- Public condoning, denying or grossly trivialising the crimes defined in Article 6 of the Charter of the International Military Tribunal appended to the London Agreement of 8 August 1945, directed against a group of persons or a member of such a group defined by reference to race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin when the conduct is carried out in a manner likely to incite to violence or hatred against such a group or a member of such a group.

For offences other than the ones mentioned above, Member States shall take the necessary measures to ensure that racist and xenophobic motivation is considered an aggravating circumstance, or alternatively that such motivation may be taken into consideration by the courts when determining the penalties.

Council Directive 2008/913/JHA is a part of the Slovenia's Criminal Code (*Kazenski zakonik*), Article 297: Public Incitement to Hatred, Violence or Intolerance<sup>16</sup>, Croatia's Criminal Code (*Kazneni zakon*), Article 325: Public Incitement to Violence and Hatred<sup>17</sup> and Serbia's Criminal Code (*Krivični zakonik*), Article 387: Racial and other discrimination.<sup>18</sup>

In all three countries, Constitution is the main document prohibiting discrimination and discriminatory speech and guaranteeing the freedom of expression and all other forms of hate, inflammatory, discriminatory or inciting speech are derived from this right.

For more info on the legislation of Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia please visit their home pages on the online legislation service by [OSCE-ODIHR legislationonline.org](https://www.osce-odihr.org/legislationonline.org).<sup>19</sup>

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16 Available in English: [https://www.legislationline.org/download/id/3773/file/Slovenia\\_CC\\_2008\\_en.pdf](https://www.legislationline.org/download/id/3773/file/Slovenia_CC_2008_en.pdf), page 112.

In Slovenian: <http://pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO5050>.

17 Available in English: [https://www.legislationline.org/download/id/7896/file/Croatia\\_Criminal\\_Code\\_2011\\_en.pdf](https://www.legislationline.org/download/id/7896/file/Croatia_Criminal_Code_2011_en.pdf), page 115.

In Croatian: [https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2011\\_11\\_125\\_2498.html](https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2011_11_125_2498.html).

18 Available at: <https://www.paragraf.rs/proposisi/krivicni-zakonik-2019.html> (in Serbian).

19 For Slovenia: <https://www.legislationline.org/countries/country/3/Slovenia/show>, for Croatia: <https://www.legislationline.org/countries/country/37/Croatia/show> and for Serbia: <https://www.legislationline.org/countries/country/5/Serbia/show>.

## 2.3. BASIC TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

For better understanding of the processes that lie beneath hate speech, we consider it is important to be acquainted with the basic terms and definitions of its possible compounds. The terms and definitions we are presenting here are taken from international institutions' handbooks and other educational material, for example Bookmarks by the Council of Europe's No Hate Speech movement<sup>20</sup>, WE CAN!<sup>21</sup> or Compass<sup>22</sup> manual. In this way, we want to reaffirm the use of these already defined terms and transfer them further into our local languages in the context of hate speech.

### PREJUDICES

A prejudice is a particular class of stereotype, one which contains an evaluation or judgement. Many stereotypes which appear to be neutral in fact contain an element of judgement. For example, "women aren't good at computer games" appears to be a statement of fact but it is really making a judgement about women's technical ability. Even when stereotypes or prejudice seem positive they nearly always have a negative aspect. The statement "Australians are the most generous people in the world" is positive about Australians, but it contains the judgement that people in other countries are less generous! The statement "Africans are good at sport" can be interpreted as "Africans are only good at sport". Nationalism and patriotism appear to be positive in nature, but they can easily turn into racism.

Source: Council of Europe. Bookmarks- a manual for combating hate speech online through human rights education. Page 166

### STEREOTYPES

Stereotypes are shared beliefs or thoughts about particular groups and may be positive or negative (or neutral). Although they can be useful, stereotypes become damaging when they are applied rigidly to individuals and are used as a reason for different treatment or behaviour. Stereotypes are generalisations, and will not always be true of every individual case! Examples of stereotypes include "men are stronger than women", "footballers can run faster than other people", and "all swans are white".

Source: Council of Europe. Bookmarks- a manual for combating hate speech online through human rights education. Page 167

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20 Council of Europe. Bookmarks- a manual for combating hate speech online through human rights education. 2016. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/168065dac7>.

21 Council of Europe. WE CAN! Taking Action against Hate Speech through Counter and Alternative Narratives. Revised edition, 2017. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/wecan-eng-final-23052017-web/168071ba08>.

22 Council of Europe. COMPASS- Manual for human rights education with young people. 2nd edition, updated in 2020. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/compass-eng-rev-2020-web/1680a08e40>.

## HATE CRIME

Hate crimes are criminal acts motivated by bias or prejudice towards particular groups of people. To be considered a hate crime, the offence must meet two criteria: First, the act must constitute an offence under criminal law; second, the act must have been motivated by bias.

Bias motivations can be broadly defined as preconceived negative opinions, stereotypical assumptions, intolerance or hatred directed to a particular group that shares a common characteristic, such as race, ethnicity, language, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, gender or any other fundamental characteristic. People with disabilities may also be victims of hate crimes.

Hate crimes can include threats, property damage, assault, murder or any other criminal offence committed with a bias motivation. Hate crimes don't only affect individuals from specific groups. People or property merely associated with – or even perceived to be a member of – a group that shares a protected characteristic, such as human rights defenders, community centres or places of worship, can also be targets of hate crimes.

Source: OSCE ODIHR, <https://hatecrime.osce.org/what-hate-crime>

## CYBERBULLYING

“... cyberbullying means any electronic communication including, but not limited to, one shown to be motivated by a student’s actual or perceived race, colour, religion, national origin, ancestry or ethnicity, sexual orientation, physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability, gender, gender identity and expression, or other distinguishing personal characteristic, or based on association with any person identified above, when the written, verbal or physical act or electronic communication is intended to:

- Physically harm a student or damage the student’s property; or
- Substantially interfere with a student’s educational opportunities; or
- Be so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or (iv) Substantially disrupt the orderly operation of the school.”

Source: Anti-Defamation League. (2010). Responding to Cyberhate, Toolkit for Action. Available at: <https://www.adl.org/sites/default/files/documents/assets/pdf/combating-hate/ADL-Responding-to-Cyberhate-Toolkit.pdf>. From: Council of Europe. Bookmarks- a manual for combating hate speech online through human rights education. Page 191.

## EXAMPLES OF ONLINE ABUSE:

- Sending threats, provocative insults or racial or ethnic slurs
- Gay bashing, gender specific slurs or other forms of discrimination
- Attempting to infect the victim's computer with a virus
- Flooding an email inbox with abusive messages
- Posting or spreading false information about a person with the aim of harming the person or their reputation
- Singling someone out and inviting others to attack or make fun of them
- Pretending to be someone else to make it look like as if the other person said things they don't believe, or that aren't true about them.
- Sharing images of a person, particularly in an embarrassing situation, without their permission.
- Sharing emails without the writer's permission
- Pressurising others to exclude someone from a community (either online or offline)
- Repeatedly sending someone nasty, mean and insulting messages.

Source: Council of Europe. Bookmarks- a manual for combating hate speech online through human rights education. Page 193

## DISCRIMINATION

When negative attitudes towards a particular group result in that group being unable, or less able, to enjoy their human rights, this constitutes discrimination. Discrimination is itself a violation of human rights and may be the result either of racist attitudes, or of other prejudices which are non-racial in nature but are just as negative in their consequences for the direct victims and for society as a whole.

Source: Council of Europe. Bookmarks- a manual for combating hate speech online through human rights education. Page 168

## MEDIA (THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA)

Mass media include "traditional" broadcast media such as television, radio, movies, CDs or DVDs, as well as the print media, and also our information superhighway, the Internet along with services such as the World Wide Web, communicated via the Internet. The media have become so important in our societies that it is now hard to imagine life without television, emails, video-sharing websites, online news portals, or blogs. Their conventional role as a window on the world is still increasing. The media have acquired new functions such as a forum for social interaction and communication, a place to buy or sell goods or to collect information for any purpose, or post self-made media content.

Source: Council of Europe. Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People. Page 448

## VULNERABLE GROUPS

### Targets of hate speech

Hate speech predominantly targets social groups whose position in society is subordinated to others', or whose ideas and behaviour conflict with one prevalent system of norms.

While anyone can be a target of hate speech, in Europe there are several groups that are regularly targets of hate speech.

An online survey of the No Hate Speech Movement campaign carried out in 2015 identified the following groups as regular targets of hate speech: LGBT, Muslims, women, immigrants and ethnic minorities, Roma, Jewish, poor people, people with disabilities, Christians and other religious minorities. This is confirmed by other similar surveys and studies. Unfortunately, there is limited data on youth as targets of hate speech, but hate speech certainly targets young people as much as any other age groups and tends to have a deeper impact because of the vulnerability of many young people and of their exposure to online environments.

Source: Council of Europe. We can! Taking Action against Hate Speech. Page 38

- **BYSTANDERS / OBSERVERS**

Whenever we come across content which is harmful to others to some degree, we become a participant in the dialogue. We may ignore it, we may disseminate it further by sharing it, or we may decide to take a stand against it. Many of the activities in this manual are designed to move young people from the passive position of 'seeing-but-not-acting' to a position where they engage with the problem, in whatever is the most appropriate way. This demands skills of judgment and critical analysis, and it requires an awareness of the possible forms of action.

- **VICTIMS**

People who are either directly targeted by online hate speech or who fall into one of the common target groups for abusive or racist expression or cyberbullying need to be given strategies for protecting themselves and coping with expressions of hate. They also need skills and knowledge which will help them to address the problem, for example, by holding the responsible person to account, reporting the abuse, encouraging others to take a stand, and so on.

- **'HATERS' AND POTENTIAL HATERS**

This group includes those who disseminate hate speech online or are tempted to do so, whether by creating their own content or by sharing that of others. We should remember that just as there are some forms of hate speech which are 'worse' than others, so too can people's role as 'hater' be more or less damaging. Those who share content which is mildly racist also contribute to the general problem, even if their action is not illegal and does not directly incite others to violence. It is still a first step in a chain of harmful expression. Many people contribute to the

dissemination of hate speech online simply by sharing content which they do not recognise as harmful, abusive or fake. Avoiding this requires an ability to perceive prejudice or bias in online content and a greater degree of responsibility in creating or sharing it with others.

Source: Council of Europe. Bookmarks- a manual for combating hate speech online through human rights education. Page 183

- **THE TARGETS OR POTENTIAL TARGETS**

Some groups, or individuals, may be more vulnerable than others with respect to certain criticisms. That may be because of the way they are generally viewed by society, or the way they are represented by the media, or it may be because their own circumstances make them less able to defend themselves. A slur against Muslims, for example, is likely to be far more damaging in a country where the overwhelming majority is non-Muslim; Christians may feel more threatened where they are in the minority. Children are regarded as in need of particular attention and protection in almost every society.

The groups most commonly targeted by hate speech are identified in the definition given at the start of this section, but anyone might be a target of hate speech, even if they do not fall under one of the forms of intolerance listed.

Source: Council of Europe. Bookmarks- a manual for combating hate speech online through human rights education. Page 152

## 2.4. WHERE DO WE SEE HATE SPEECH?

In the research analysis published as a part of this project, Hate narratives on internet portals and internet communication<sup>23</sup> in Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia, we present a part of the analysis dealing with hate narratives directed against a couple of groups: refugees and other migrants, political opposition, journalists (these two groups are presented in the integral version of the analysis) and the fourth group that is different for each country; for Slovenia it is the LGBTQ community, for Croatia it is the Roma national minority and for Serbia it is the youth.

For each country, the research team detected events connected to each of the target groups in the period between June 2019 and June 2020 and using keywords, searched for articles about these events published on chosen online portals in a one-week or two-week time frame.

### SLOVENIA

In the case of Slovenia, online articles and their comments on chosen topics were analysed from two online media - national RTV Slovenia and political Nova24TV - according to their reach, number of readers and the number of responses in the comments on their portal and social media posts were analysed on Facebook and Twitter. The research team focused on the reporting characteristics (tone – positive, negative, indifferent; wording used, general atmosphere etc.) in news media articles and hateful, as well as positive, comments and the dynamics of communication in user-generated content. For each target group, the research team identified the main hate narrative and its sub-narratives that appeared in the analysed online media.

For the target group refugees and other migrants, the main hate narrative was identified as: “Refugees are threatening European society; therefore, it is justified to limit their arrival, including with physical violence (shooting them).” The sub-narratives included:

- They are not refugees but (economic) migrants.
- Refugees are violent by their nature, potential criminals or even terrorists.
- Refugees are violating laws and crossing borders illegally. With that, they are attacking the rule of law and sovereignty of the country they are coming to.

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23 For Slovenia: Šulc, A. Šori, I. Mirovni inštitut, Univerza v Ljubljani (Fakulteta za družbene vede). Sovražni narativi v spletnih medijih in spletni komunikaciji v Sloveniji. (2020). Available at: [https://www.cms.hr/system/article\\_document/doc/714/Sovrazni-narativi-v-spletnih-medijih-in-spletni-komunikaciji.pdf](https://www.cms.hr/system/article_document/doc/714/Sovrazni-narativi-v-spletnih-medijih-in-spletni-komunikaciji.pdf).

For Croatia: Lalić, S. Senta, C. Centar za mirovne studije. Narativi mržnje u internetskim medijima i internetskoj komunikaciji u Hrvatskoj. (2020). Available at: [https://www.cms.hr/system/publication/pdf/147/Narativi\\_mr\\_nje\\_u\\_internetskim\\_medijima\\_i\\_internetskoj\\_komunikaciji\\_u\\_Hrvatskoj.pdf](https://www.cms.hr/system/publication/pdf/147/Narativi_mr_nje_u_internetskim_medijima_i_internetskoj_komunikaciji_u_Hrvatskoj.pdf).

For Serbia: Janjić, S. Novosadska novinarska škola. Govor mržnje na portalima i društvenim mrežama u Srbiji. (2020). Available at: [https://www.cms.hr/system/article\\_document/doc/713/Odgovor-Narativi-mrznje-Srbija.pdf](https://www.cms.hr/system/article_document/doc/713/Odgovor-Narativi-mrznje-Srbija.pdf).



- The arrival of refugees is, in fact, the planned Islamization and invasion of Europe by the East.
- Refugees didn't come to Europe to work but to exploit our system and to live at our expense.
- There are too many immigrants from the Middle East and Africa. With mass immigration and a disproportionately higher birth rate, they are threatening the existence of Europeans.

For the target group of the political opponents to the government, the main hate narrative was identified as: "Individuals who oppose the government (and who take part in anti-government protests) are against our country, morally corrupt and do not comply with Slovenian values."

The sub-narratives included:

- Opponents of the government glorify the communist totalitarian system and its crimes.
- These are unemployed people who live at the expense of taxpayers or self-proclaimed cultural workers who unjustifiably receive financial support instead of working.
- Opponents of the current government are mostly immigrants from the Balkans. They are showing their negative attitude and ingratitude to Slovenia.
- Opponents of the government are violent, rioting and destroying property of others.
- Movements against the current government are organized by opposition parties who are inviting people to such events to overthrow the coalition. They operate within a deep state.
- With such celebrations and protests against the government, its opponents are endangering public health.

For the LGBTQ target group, the main hate narrative was: "Public displays of LGBTQ couples' love is not acceptable. These are deviant relationships that threaten the moral values of society." The sub-narratives included:

- Relationships between LGBTQ people are distasteful and disgusting. Their sexual orientation should be hidden behind four walls.
- LGBTQ orientation is not natural and should be diagnosed as an illness.
- Through various institution, including the media, the LGBTQ community wants to indoctrinate their sick mentality into our society.
- Public displays of LGBTQ relationships are harming our children. They should not be exposed to such acts.
- We should boycott the T-2 company because of their unacceptable advertisement with LGBTQ content.

## CROATIA

In the case of Croatia, analysed articles were published on various portals, readers' comments and comments on Facebook posts of these articles. In each of the four case studies of hate narratives (refugees and other migrants, political opposition, journalists and Roma national minority), the main hate narrative and several sub-narratives were detected, as well as responses to these narratives.

For the target group of refugees and other migrants, the main narrative was identified as: "arrival of the refugees and other migrants presents a threat to Croatian and European society". The sub-narratives included:

- Migrants are uncivilized, aggressive, attacking the police and local population and breaking the law by crossing the border illegally.
- Migrants are potential terrorists.
- Migrants are a threat to the health care system and should not have access to health care.
- Migrants are a threat to the values of the society because they come from countries with completely different cultural values.
- Migrants are eligible to join the military, they should have stayed in their countries and fought.
- Advocates of the rights of migrants are hypocrites and mercenaries that work against the interests of Croatia.

For the target group Roma, the following main narrative was detected: "Roma are a problem for other citizens of Croatia because they don't want to adapt to the majority culture and way of life". The sub-narratives included:

- Roma are violent, they steal and break the law, disturbing the safety of citizens of Croatia and their property.
- Roma don't want to work and educate themselves and they misuse the social care system.
- Roma in Croatia enjoy greater rights than other citizens.
- Advocates for the rights of Roma don't know what the situation on the ground is, are hypocritical and malevolent.

## SERBIA

In the case of Serbia, for the target group “migrants” the main narrative was: “Migrants will “Islamize” Serbia. Migrants are terrorists.”

The dominant narrative does not refer directly to migrants, but to the authorities in Serbia, assuming that they - for personal interests, lack of integrity and patriotism, or good relations with the European Union - agree with immigration and "Islamization of Serbia". Although these comments primarily read intolerance towards the Serbian government (the Serbian Progressive Party), they are based on intolerance towards Islam. Other narratives included:

- Migrants will Islamize Serbia and destroy the Serbian identity,
- Migrants are described as terrorists (ISIS warriors, murderers, mujahedin),
- Migrations are seen as part of a wider conspiracy or secret plan (the great replacement theory).

For the target group “youth” main narrative are sexist insults and calls for cyber violence. Other narratives included insulting comments based on the physical appearance.

## 2.4.1. HATE SPEECH AND SOCIAL NETWORKS

Social media or networks are communication channels that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking, including their own circle but as well in wider communication circles and audiences.

These wider circles are sometimes poisoned with content known as a phrase “hate speech” but this usually refers to public incitement to hatred or violence, calls for discrimination or other expression of limiting someone’s rights or access to rights based on that person’s characteristics.

When this type of content occurs on social media, social media are obliged to protect the victim by taking action regarding the content. This is in a nutshell what the **Code of conduct on countering illegal hate speech online**<sup>24</sup> says. This document was adopted by the European Commission in May 2016 “to prevent and counter the spread of illegal hate speech online” and agreed with Facebook, Microsoft, Twitter and YouTube. In the course of 2018, Instagram, Snapchat and Dailymotion joined the Code of Conduct. Jeuxvideo.com joined in January 2019 and TikTok joined in September 2020.

The aforementioned four initial platforms agreed to assess the majority of users’ notifications in 24 hours also respecting EU and national legislation on hate speech and committed to remove, if necessary, those messages assessed illegal. The four companies owning the platforms also agreed to further work on improving the feedback to users and being more transparent towards the general society.

The implementation of the Code of Conduct is evaluated through a regular monitoring exercise set up in collaboration with a network of civil society organisations located in the EU Member States. Using a commonly agreed methodology, these organisations test how the IT companies are implementing the commitments in the Code.<sup>25</sup>

Each social media platform developed its own community standards- guidelines or policies on hate speech that regulate in which circumstances what type of content will be removed for violation of set rules. Some platforms have the appeal system in place, so the removed content might be reconsidered and made visible again. Most elaborated appeal system is the one of Facebook and Instagram - Oversight Board. The purpose of the Board is “to promote free expression by making principled, independent decisions regarding content on Facebook and Instagram and by issuing recommendations on the relevant Facebook company content policy.”<sup>26</sup>

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24 European Commission. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/just/document.cfm?doc\\_id=42985](https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/just/document.cfm?doc_id=42985).

25 Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/aid\\_development\\_cooperation\\_fundamental\\_rights\\_assessment\\_of\\_the\\_code\\_of\\_conduct\\_on\\_hate\\_speech\\_on\\_line\\_-\\_state\\_of\\_play\\_\\_0.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/aid_development_cooperation_fundamental_rights_assessment_of_the_code_of_conduct_on_hate_speech_on_line_-_state_of_play__0.pdf).

26 Available at: <https://oversightboard.com/>.

The Board operates under the Charter - the foundational governing document - outlining the board's structure, defining its responsibilities and purpose and explaining its relationship with the company. Further, the Charter establishes the Board's membership, governance and decision-making authority.<sup>27</sup>

Here is a brief overview of social media community standards, guidelines or rules of conduct:

- **Facebook** defines hate speech as “a direct attack against people on the basis of what we call protected characteristics: race, ethnicity, national origin, disability, religious affiliation, caste, sexual orientation, sex, gender identity and serious disease. We define attacks as violent or dehumanising speech, harmful stereotypes, statements of inferiority, expressions of contempt, disgust or dismissal, cursing and calls for exclusion or segregation. We consider age a protected characteristic when referenced along with another protected characteristic. We also protect refugees, migrants, immigrants and asylum seekers from the most severe attacks, though we do allow commentary and criticism of immigration policies. Similarly, we provide some protections for characteristics such as occupation, when they're referenced along with a protected characteristic.”<sup>28</sup>
- **Twitter** says: “you may not promote violence against or directly attack or threaten other people on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, caste, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, religious affiliation, age, disability, or serious disease. We also do not allow accounts whose primary purpose is inciting harm towards others on the basis of these categories.”<sup>29</sup>
- **YouTube** removes content promoting violence or hatred against individuals or groups based on any of the following attributes: age, caste, disability, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, nationality, race, immigration status, religion, sex/gender, sexual orientation, victims of a major violent event and their kin, veteran status.<sup>30</sup>
- **Instagram's** community guidelines cover hate speech, bullying and abuse stating they will “remove credible threats of violence, hate speech and the targeting of private individuals. We do not allow attacks or abuse based on race, ethnicity, national origin, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, disability or disease.”<sup>31</sup>

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27 Available at: <https://oversightboard.com/governance/>. The Oversight Board appeals process gives users a way to challenge content decisions on Facebook or Instagram. If your content was taken down and you requested a review of the decision and that final decision is still against restoring your content, you can appeal to the Oversight Board. The Board staff will evaluate submitted cases, and consider eligible cases from those submissions as it determines which to review in-depth. Criteria for selection of the eligible cases are difficulty, significance and global relevance, as these cases can inform future policy. More on the appeals process: <https://oversightboard.com/appeals-process/>.

28 Available at: [https://www.facebook.com/communitystandards/hate\\_speech](https://www.facebook.com/communitystandards/hate_speech).

29 Available at: <https://help.twitter.com/en/rules-and-policies/hateful-conduct-policy>.

30 Available at: <https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/2801939>.

31 Available at: <https://about.instagram.com/blog/announcements/instagram-community-guidelines-faqs>

- Snapchat defines hate speech as content that demeans, defames, or promotes discrimination or violence on the basis of race, colour, caste, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or veteran status, immigration status, socio-economic status, age, weight or pregnancy status is prohibited.<sup>32</sup>
- Dailymotion is a French global video streaming service. Dailymotion prohibits the following types of content on its service: child abuse, sexually explicit content, terrorist content and/or which promotes violent extremist acts/groups or individuals, content that incites violence or dangerous activities and other content.<sup>33</sup>
- TikTok states they are “a diverse and inclusive community that has no tolerance for discrimination. We do not permit content that contains hate speech or involves hateful behaviour and we remove it from our platform.” Further, they will “suspend or ban accounts that engage in hate speech violations or which are associated with hate speech”. Their definition of hate speech is: “content that attacks, threatens, incites violence against, or otherwise dehumanizes an individual or a group on the basis of the following protected attributes: race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, caste, sexual orientation, sex, gender, gender identity, serious disease, disability, immigration status.”<sup>34</sup>

## TRANSPARENCY

All of the social media platforms publish transparency reports. Click on the links to find out more.

- From Facebook’s [transparency report](#) we can learn more on the actions taken by their company in combating hate speech – on how much content did they take action on? Of the violating content Facebook actioned, how much did the platform find before users reported it? Also, they provide information on appealed decisions- restored content Facebook incorrectly removed. As Instagram is a social media platform owned by Facebook, everything that applies to one, applies to the other as well.
- Transparency reports from Twitter are available [here](#).
- YouTube’s transparency reports are [here](#).
- Snapchat publishes [transparency reports](#) that offer insight into the violating content the network acts upon and other legal notifications.
- Transparency report by TikTok is available [here](#).

<sup>32</sup> Available at: <https://snap.com/en-US/community-guidelines>.

<sup>33</sup> Available at: <https://faq.dailymotion.com/hc/en-us/articles/360015770319-Prohibited-content->

<sup>34</sup> Available at: <https://www.tiktok.com/community-guidelines?lang=en#38>.

In the four years from its implementation, the Code of conduct on countering illegal hate speech online requested from IT companies, owners of the social media platforms to:

- Have rules and community standards that prohibit hate speech and put in place systems and teams to review content that is reported to violate these standards.
- Review the majority of the content flagged within 24 hours and remove or disable access to hate speech content, if necessary,

On average, IT companies are now assessing 89% of flagged content within 24 hours, up from 81% in 2018.

The removal rate is stable at more than 70% on average. In 2016, after the first monitoring exercise on the implementation of the Code of conduct only 28% of the content flagged was removed. The current average removal rate can be considered as satisfactory in an area such as hate speech, given that the line against speech that is protected by the right to freedom of expression is not always easy to draw and is highly dependent on the context in which the content was placed.

- Provide regular training to their staff.

All IT companies report that they are holding regular and frequent trainings and provide coaching and support for their teams of content reviewers, including on the specificities of hate speech content.

- Engage in partnerships and training activities with civil society in order to enlarge their network of trusted reporters.

The IT companies reported a considerable extension of their network of “trusted flaggers” in Europe since 2016. They are engaging with them on a regular basis to increase understanding of national specificities of hate speech.

- Work [with trusted flaggers] on promoting independent counter-narratives and educational programmes.

IT companies also work together with their “trusted flaggers” on campaigns for tolerance and pluralism online. Between 2017 and 2019, four workshops took place at the headquarters of YouTube, Twitter and Facebook to facilitate such initiatives. As a result of these, more than 40 NGOs during the European elections of 2019 launched an EU wide online campaign in 24 languages, focused on promoting healthy and tolerant conversations online under the hashtag #WeDeserveBetter.

- **Designate national contact points for receiving notices, in particular by national authorities.**

All IT companies that subscribed to the Code of Conduct have established national points of contact to facilitate contact with the relevant competent authorities at national level. It is important to highlight that the work in the Code of Conduct complements legislation fighting racism and xenophobia (Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA), which requires authors of illegal hate speech offences- whether online or offline- to be effectively prosecuted.

- **Promote transparency towards users as well as to the general public.**

In 2016, IT companies only made information available on the number of law enforcement requests and did not provide any detail on online hate speech as a specific ground for removal. Today, the removals of hate speech content are clearly presented, on a regular basis, in each of the IT company transparency reports.



## 2.4.2. HATE SPEECH AND SCHOOLS

The educational system has the strongest role in the process of socialization through regular schooling and extracurricular activities. Thus, there are numerous possibilities of how the concept of hate speech prevention could be realized through schooling and non-formal ways of education such as workshops and seminars held by trained teachers or organized by civil society organizations.

It is important to stress that, since human rights are a part of every person's personal or professional sphere of life no matter their gender, age, sex, education and status in the society, emphasizing the importance of human rights is not only an obligation of the teachers who teach social sciences or humanities (sociology, the constitution, history and civic education), but an obligation of all workers in the educational system. Civil society organizations have their role here as well, since their mission is the preservation of human rights and fighting against discrimination.

**Therefore, the prevention of hate speech could be realized through different educational modules in numerous ways. It is by teaching about: prejudices, sanctions for discriminatory acts, human rights, critical thinking, media and internet literacy.**

Given that prejudices motivate individuals and groups to spread hate speech or to discriminate others in some other way, it is believed that education about prejudices could be beneficial. Hence, prejudices, as opinions which contain intense negative emotions towards others, are the essence of hate speech. Although prejudices are opinions, these opinions could be based on disinformation, wrong or selective interpretation of facts, poor conclusions about different phenomena being causally correlated when they really are not, and other misconceptions. They are a result of groundless generalization. Although stereotypes can be threatening, it is considered that prejudices are the ones that motivate people to engage in discriminatory acts because of the strong feelings from which they are made of. Stereotypes are simplified and excessive generalizations, but they can be changed (for example, through contact with somebody from a different culture). However, prejudices are powerful beliefs that do not tend to be changed<sup>35</sup>

**Education about prejudices** is an approach that emphasizes the prevention rather than the treatment of the disease. If we start looking at prejudices as opinions which are based on logical mistakes and negative emotions and not on rationality and cognition, then this type of thinking could begin to be perceived as incorrect. Although stressing the incorrectness of prejudices

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35 Mihić, Vladimir. (2015). Stereotipi i predrasude: od slike o svetu oko nas do sukoba i konflikata. Novi Sad: Filozofski fakultet. Available in Serbian at: <http://digitalna.ff.uns.ac.rs/sadrzaj/2015/978-86-6065-320-0>.

could be seen as a mild approach in combating hate speech and discrimination, the truth is that people (unless they are naturally open-minded) do not tend to question their own opinions, and especially those opinions that come with strong emotions.

Talking about **sanctions of discriminatory acts** could also be an approach to prevention. It might be explained to children that these acts are against the law and that there are some penalties for these acts. In that way, through fear of punishment, hate speech could be reduced in the public sphere. However, it is clear that this approach does not contribute to a change in consciousness, so real prevention must be conducted on another basis.

Therefore, talking about sanctions could be a successful method of preventing hate speech in high schools, especially for those children who already went through all phases of prejudice development<sup>36</sup> or children who already conduct discriminatory acts. Simultaneously, the harmfulness of prejudices could be presented with stressing their logical fallibility. The educational system offers many different possibilities of subjects where this could be taught such as civic education, logic, philosophy, sociology, psychology and media literacy, subjects which exists in some Balkan countries (in Serbia these subjects currently exist in the first and second grade of high school. It is called 'Language, media and culture').

In Serbia, e.g. accounting that curriculum for civic education and constitution already provides room for human rights education, that is a great opportunity for teachers not only to introduce students to the basics of human rights, but also to stress their importance. It is crucial to emphasize what specific rights and liberties serve as human rights- for example, freedom of belief and religion, freedom to express or not to express your national identity, freedom of opinion and expression, right to an education in a person's native language etc. This kind of teaching about human rights is called "human rights education", and it could be one of the ways in which hate speech could be prevented – by suggesting that hate speech is an act against these rights. Quality human rights education includes three dimensions- Learning about human rights, Learning through human rights, Learning for human rights.<sup>37</sup> 'Learning about human rights' requires more significant effort from all the actors of a certain school, and it implies 'that educational settings protect the human rights of learners', including, for example, the right for Jewish students to a learning environment free of anti-Semitism. 'Learning through human rights' is a highly efficient model of learning because it gives a set example to students, meaning that teachers themselves do not tolerate hate speech and treat all students equally. "Learning for human rights" implies affirmation of human rights and "empowers students to exercise their rights and defend the rights of others". This is also a valuable skill, and by encouraging it an

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36 Read 'How prejudice is learned' from Gordon W. Allport. Available in English at: <https://www.nj.gov/education/holocaust/resources/HowPrejudiceIsLearned.pdf>.

37 UNESCO & OSCE. (2018). Addressing Anti-Semitism through Education. Available in English at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000263702?posInSet=52&queryId=5c180c59-393a-4df7-aa82-88f4ba1ee155>.

environment which respects the rights of others could be created (UNESCO & OSCE, 2018: 34).

**Media and information literacy (MIL)**, especially the **skill of critical thinking** which MIL reinforces, is also recognized as a tool for preventing hate speech and teaching about it. UNESCO, in a publication called “Countering Online Hate Speech”<sup>38</sup>, suggests that “The expectation is that these media and information literacy competencies can enhance individuals’ ability to identify and question hateful content online, understand some of its assumptions, biases, and prejudices, and encourage the elaboration of arguments to confront it’ (p. 34). Therefore, critical thinking, maybe the most important skill that MIL enhances, does not apply only to media content, but it is transferable, meaning that this skill concerns other parts of life as well. In that way, through education about media content, students learn to question politics, and other relationships in the society when informing themselves.

**Internet literacy** has also been identified as a method of preventing hate speech in virtual space. In the publication “Bookmarks: A manual for combating hate speech online through human rights education”<sup>39</sup> authors Keen and Georgescu (2015) refer to Council of Europe’s ‘Guide to Human Rights for Internet Users’ in which the need for educators and parents to train and inform children about how to navigate the Internet safely and how to recognize harmful content is underlined (p. 182). In the publication, it is also stressed that the students need to be able to recognize hate speech primarily and that ‘This requires knowing what constitutes hate speech and knowing how to assess the possible impact, but it can also demand a deeper awareness of underlying messages and the ability to spot bias and prejudice where these are only implicit’ (p. 184).

So, it can be concluded that in order for hate speech to be prevented successfully among the youth, it is necessary for them to be taught about prejudices and discrimination such as hate speech and learn “for human rights” and to empower them and support in improving their media, information and internet literacy skills as well as critical thinking. If knowledge and skills from these approaches can be combined, it can be expected that students will develop adequate internal resources to identify hate speech, to be aware of its consequences, and not contribute to further discrimination by spreading it.

In order to be able to work with students on understanding and fighting hate speech, it is important for teachers to be familiar with and able to transfer above described crucial information and knowledge.

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38 UNESCO. (2015). Countering online hate speech. Available in English at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000233231>.

39 Keen, Ellie & Georgescu, Mara. (2016). Bookmarks: A manual for combating hate speech online through human rights education. Council of Europe. Available in English at: <https://rm.coe.int/168065dac7>.

# MATERIALS FOR TEACHERS

## EXAMPLES FROM SLOVENIA, CROATIA AND SERBIA

DEVELOPED BY: LANA ZDRAVKOVIĆ, LOVORKA BAČIĆ, VALENTNA SIGETI

Following this framework and introduction to hate speech online, a variety of materials to support teachers and to be used at schools are developed. A group of teachers from each county were consulted and gave feedback to the materials.

These ideas can support and help teachers and school staff to structure teaching units for students, training for teachers, meeting with parents and school projects. Three localized version with specific materials for Serbian, Croatian and Slovenian school system are available. We present selected parts that, slightly adapted could be used in different contexts and countries.

### 3.1. INTRODUCTORY WORKSHOP: RECOGNIZING, UNDERSTANDING AND CONFRONTING HATE SPEECH / WHAT IS HATE SPEECH / HOW I CAN RECOGNIZE IT AND WHAT I CAN DO

The workshop deals with hate speech as a multifaceted concept, offers sociological, political, and legal definitions, develops critical thinking, which is necessary for understanding and recognizing hate speech and its distinction from the freedom of speech, emphasizes recognizing hate speech online and empowers students to engage when confronted with hate speech (online or in everyday situations).

<b>Goals of the workshop</b>	The aim of the workshop is to enable students to develop knowledge of what hate speech is (sociological, political, legal framework), critical thinking about how and why hate speech arises as a broader social phenomenon and how it differs from freedom of speech (theoretical framework), and knowledge of how to take measures against hate speech (appeal framework).
<b>Target learners:</b>	students from the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th year of secondary school
<b>Time frame:</b>	45 minutes
<b>Correlation to the subject:</b>	sociology, philosophy, psychology, economics, history, computer science

Learning outcomes:	After the workshop, students should have basic knowledge of the hate speech phenomenon; know its definition in Slovenian and European legislation; understand the sensitivity of its definition, its relationship to freedom of speech and how they differ in the wider sociological and political context. By discussing concrete examples of hate speech online, they should learn to recognize hate speech and respond to it appropriately. At the same time, they should become aware of their active role in building effective counter-narratives of hate speech, that is, to appease hostility in online comments.
Methods:	presentation, group work, moderated discussion

## I PRESENTATION (15 MIN)

### 1. A general definition of hate speech as a phenomenon and the line between hate speech and freedom of speech. When does freedom of speech turn into hate speech?

There is no generally applicable definition of hate speech as it varies from country to country. The concept is analysed by the social sciences and humanities (sociology, communication, journalism, discursive literature) as well as medicine (psychiatry) and technology (computer science). We can find the most elaborated and common discussions on the topic of hate speech in the field of law, especially in the United States, where the concept also first appeared. The most important and sensitive are the discussions on the relationship between hate speech and freedom of speech. Freedom of speech is a fundamental human right. It stems from fundamental philosophical works such as John Milton's *Areopagitica* and John Stuart Mill's *On Freedom*, as the idea that freedom of speech leads to truth. It is a necessary precondition for the autonomy of each individual and an important factor in the development and maintenance of democratic institutions. However, there is a consensus in Europe that freedom of speech is not absolute but is limited by human dignity, other people's rights and the principles of safety, public order and peace, public health, and public morality.

#### A) FREEDOM OF SPEECH

- **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), Article 19**  
Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

- **European Convention on Human Rights (1950), Article 10 (Freedom of expression)**
  1. Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers. This Article shall not prevent States from requiring the licensing of broadcasting, television or cinema enterprises.
  2. The exercise of these freedoms, since it carries with it duties and responsibilities, may be subject to such formalities, conditions, restrictions or penalties as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of national security, territorial integrity or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, for the protection of the reputation or rights of others, for preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, or for maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary.
- **Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia, Article 39 (Freedom of Expression)**  
 Freedom of expression of thought, freedom of speech and public appearance, of the press and other forms of public communication and expression shall be guaranteed. Everyone may freely collect, receive and disseminate information and opinions.  
 Except in such cases as are provided by law, everyone has the right to obtain information of a public nature in which he has a well-founded legal interest under law.

## B) HATE SPEECH

- **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)**

Article 7 - All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

European Convention on Human Rights (1950)

Article 14 (Prohibition of discrimination)- The enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in this Convention shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.

The implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights within the Council of Europe is the responsibility of the European Court of Human Rights. The Court's decisions have a significant impact on the legal regulation of hate speech in individual member states of the Council of Europe.

- **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966), Article 20**
  1. Any propaganda for war shall be prohibited by law.
  2. Any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law.
  
- **Council of Europe, Recommendation No. R (97) 20**

“[...] [t]he term "hate speech" shall be understood as covering all forms of expression which spread, incite, promote or justify racial hatred, xenophobia, anti-Semitism or other forms of hatred based on intolerance, including: intolerance expressed by aggressive nationalism and ethnocentrism, discrimination and hostility against minorities, migrants and people of immigrant origin.”
  
- **The European Council Framework Decision on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law (2008)**

Certain forms of conduct as outlined below, are punishable as criminal offences:

  - public incitement to violence or hatred directed against a group of persons or a member of such a group defined on the basis of race, colour, descent, religion or belief, or national or ethnic origin;
  - the above-mentioned offence when carried out by the public dissemination or distribution of tracts, pictures or other material;
  - publicly condoning, denying or grossly trivialising crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes as defined in the Statute of the International Criminal Court (Articles 6, 7 and 8) and crimes defined in Article 6 of the Charter of the International Military Tribunal, when the conduct is carried out in a manner likely to incite violence or hatred against such a group or a member of such a group.
  
- **Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia, Article 63 (Prohibition of Incitement to Discrimination and Intolerance and Prohibition of Incitement to Violence and War)**

Any incitement to national, racial, religious or other discrimination and the inflaming of national, racial, religious or other hatred and intolerance are unconstitutional. Any incitement to violence and war is unconstitutional.
  
- **Criminal Code, Article 297 (Public Incitement to Hatred, Violence or Intolerance)**
  1. Whoever publicly provokes or incites hatred based on nationality, race, religion or ethnicity, gender, skin colour, background, pecuniary status, education, social status, political and other conviction, disability, sexual orientation, or any other personal circumstance, and commits the offence in a manner that might jeopardise or disturb public law and order, or uses force or threats, verbal abuse or insults, shall be sentenced to imprisonment for not more than two years.
  2. The same sentence shall be imposed on a person who, in the manner defined in the preceding paragraph, publicly disseminates ideas on the supremacy of one race over another

or provides aid in any manner for a racist activity, or denies, diminishes the significance of, approves, disregards, ridicules or advocates genocide, the Holocaust, crimes against humanity, war crimes, aggression, or other criminal offences against humanity as defined in the legal order of the Republic of Slovenia.

When the offence under preceding paragraphs has been committed by means of a publication in the mass media or on websites, the editor-in-chief shall also be sentenced.

When the offence referred to in the first or the second paragraph of this Article is committed by an official through the abuse of office or of official authority, he shall be sentenced to imprisonment for not more than five years.

- **Mass Media Act, Article 8 (Prohibition of incitement to unequal treatment and intolerance)**  
The dissemination of programmes that encourage national, racial, religious, sexual or any other unequal treatment, or violence and war, or incite national, racial, religious, sexual or any other form of hatred and intolerance shall be prohibited.
- **Protection of Public Order Act**  
Among others, the following actions are defined as offences by the Act: violent and rude behaviour that causes the feeling of humiliation, endangerment, distress, or fear (Article 6); indecent behaviour in a public space (Article 7) and writing on buildings (Article 13). Furthermore, Article 20 stipulates that the perpetrator shall be fined with a higher fine if the acts referred to in the aforementioned articles are committed with the intention of inciting national, racial, sexual, ethnic, religious, political, or sexual-orientation based intolerance.

## 2. Conclusion

Most European countries adopted a generally applicable definition according to which hate speech is PUBLIC SPEECH that promotes HATRED OF AN INDIVIDUAL OR A GROUP OF PEOPLE based on certain arbitrary and unchanging personal characteristics (skin colour, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability...) and thus:

- Directly threatens the rights of other individuals and groups;
- Threatens generally accepted social values of freedom and equality of all people, the acceptance of diversity and inclusion, and contributes to the erosion of democratic values;
- Ultimately denies the fundamental social values, which are the basis for our understanding of freedom of speech as one of the fundamental rights.

Hate speech against individuals can include insults or slander, which are dealt with within private relationships or in private lawsuits in court (crimes against honour and reputation that are prosecuted upon a motion). Expression that incites hatred against national, racial, religious,



or other groups of people falls under a special legal category. A special legal category is expression that incites hatred against national, racial, religious or other groups of people. Such expression can promote human rights violations and pose a threat to society both nationally and internationally. These types of expressions are prosecuted ex officio and not (explicitly) at the request of the injured party, as is the case for offenses against honour and reputation.

The sociological definition of hate speech is not the same as its legal regulation, criminal hate speech is not the same as socially unacceptable hate speech, insults or offensive speech is also not hate speech, and any online violence is not necessarily hate speech. It is generally accepted that the personal freedom of each individual is – in an ethical / philosophical sense – limited by the freedom of others, regardless of the legal basis. That is why hate speech cannot always be legally prosecuted, but it must be publicly condemned as socially inappropriate and unacceptable.

The United Nations Human Rights Committee expressed concern about the increase in online hate speech in Slovenia in 2016, which was found on online forums among other places and aimed particularly at migrants, Roma people, members of the LGBTIQ community and Muslims. The Committee also expressed disappointment with low percentage of reports and legal responses concerning cases of racial discrimination, including the prosecution of those involved in serious cases of hate speech that led to the promotion of hostility or violence.

### 3. Presentation of the Spletno oko hotline, the mechanisms for reporting hate speech, the Code of Hate Speech Regulation on web portals, and important Slovenian literature on hate speech

Spletno oko ([www.spletno-ok.si](http://www.spletno-ok.si)) is a hotline that enables Slovenian Internet users to anonymously report hate speech and child sexual abuse images online. If you have come across content on the Internet that you find objectionable, you can report it quickly, securely, and anonymously to the Spletno oko hotline. They evaluate it to determine if it is hate speech and forward the report to law enforcements in case of alleged illegality.

Spletno oko cooperates with the police, internet service providers, web portals and other interested governmental and non-governmental organizations, thus contributing to the reduction of child sexual abuse and hate speech contents on the Internet.

Due to user's anonymity, the Internet brings new opportunities to express opinions online that often lead to the expression of intolerance and the spread of hate speech. Slovenian online media have been facing increasing problems in recent years on account of insulting and hostile comments. Together with Slovenian news portals, Spletno oko prepared a Code of Hate Speech

Regulation on web portals ([https://www.spletno-oko.si/sites/default/files/kodeks\\_oblikovan\\_0.pdf](https://www.spletno-oko.si/sites/default/files/kodeks_oblikovan_0.pdf)). The Code was developed with the aim of establishing uniform guidelines for the regulation of hate speech on Slovenian web portals. The Code refers only to Article 297 of the Criminal Code and does not aim to regulate offensive, vulgar, or otherwise inappropriate speech that does not contain elements of a criminal offense under that article.

The signatories of the Code are: 24ur.com, Delo.si, Dnevnik.si, Multimedia Centre of RTV SLO, Siol.net, Slovenskenovice.si, Spletno oko, Safer Internet Centre Slovenia, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana, Večer.com, Zurnal24.si.

## II GROUP WORK (20 MIN)

1. Divided into groups of three to four students, each group works on one example of online hate speech (concrete examples: Twitter, Facebook (personal status, status posted in a group, or a comment on the content), commentary under the news on RTV SLO, 24ur, Nova24TV...), discusses it and decides whether it is hate speech or freedom of speech. If they determine that it is hate speech, they also have to specify under which law and what punishment they are proposing. They write down their findings.
2. Each group presents its findings to the entire class.
3. The teacher monitors the discussion, comments and gives additional information if necessary.

## III FINAL DISCUSSION (10 MIN)

Students are encouraged to share their experiences with online hate speech and ideas on how they could intervene. If necessary, they are asked what it would mean to replace race, gender, nationality, ethnic origin, religion, etc. with eye or hair colour, how someone dresses, etc., to better understand the arbitrariness of exclusion when dealing with hate speech.

**Materials used in workshop:** PowerPoint presentation, Cards with examples of hate speech, info material for teachers- for their preparation (optional)

- Utilitarianism/On Liberty, John Stuart Mill, 2003. Ljubljana: Krtina
- Hate speech as an act of violence, Vesna Leskošek, Us and Them: Intolerance in Slovenia, 2005. Ljubljana: The Peace Institute  
[https://www.varuh-rs.si/fileadmin/user\\_upload/pdf/zbornik\\_JKN/ZBORNIK.pdf](https://www.varuh-rs.si/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/zbornik_JKN/ZBORNIK.pdf)

- Two Examples of Advocacy of Hate Speech, Boris Vežjak, 2006. Dialogi, revija za kulturo in družbo, 42(5–6)
- Hate Speech, Srečo Dragoš, 2007. Socialno delo, 46(3)  
<http://www.dlib.si/stream/URN:NBN:SI:doc-Q16S5X50/8d4444ea-9f15-409b-98c0-253875c9cbaa/PDF>
- Hate speech in the Republic of Slovenia: an overview of the situation, Andrej Motl and Veronika Bajt, 2016. Ljubljana: The Peace Institute  
[https://www.mirovni-institut.si/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Ocena-Stanja\\_prelomOK\\_splet.pdf](https://www.mirovni-institut.si/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Ocena-Stanja_prelomOK_splet.pdf)
- Handbook for Reporting Hate Speech on Social Networks, Iztok Šori and Andrej Motl, 2018. Ljubljana: Faculty of Social Sciences, Safer Internet Centre, Spletno oko  
[https://www.spletno-okno.si/sites/default/files/prirocnik\\_za\\_prijavljanje\\_sovraznega\\_govora\\_na\\_druzbenih\\_omrezjih.pdf](https://www.spletno-okno.si/sites/default/files/prirocnik_za_prijavljanje_sovraznega_govora_na_druzbenih_omrezjih.pdf)
- Criminal Prosecution of Hate Speech in Slovenia under Article 297 of the Criminal Code: analysis of the practice in prosecuting the crime of public incitement to hatred, violence, and intolerance in the period from 2008 to 2018, 2021. Ljubljana: Human Rights Ombudsman.  
[https://www.varuh-rs.si/fileadmin/user\\_upload/pdf/Razne\\_publikacije/Sovrazni\\_govor\\_knjizica2.pdf](https://www.varuh-rs.si/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/Razne_publikacije/Sovrazni_govor_knjizica2.pdf)

## EXAMPLES:

### 1. Comment on the web portal of a certain radio (2011)

From the description of the criminal offense, allegedly committed by the accused \_\_\_\_\_, it is evident that on 15th of February 2011 at 11.16 am on the web portal Radio \_\_\_\_\_ under the published article entitled \_\_\_\_\_ he wrote and publicly published his hostile comment directed against the Roma community, which has a special position and special rights under Article 65 of the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia, that read: “A couple of inches of ammonal, a couple of M75 bombs, and a couple of A1C-47 just in case, I don’t think there’s any other way. One-by-one method would also work, to make them think a little. [Radio] Krka, I have a song request; Korado / Brendi, where have all the gypsies gone. Thank you.”, which incited ethnic hatred, violence, and intolerance to the detriment of the Roma community.

This was a so called “landmark judgment” of the Supreme Court, which granted the request for protection of legality and found that the judgment of the court of second instance violated the provision of the first paragraph of Article 297 of the Criminal Code in connection with point 1 of Article 372 of the Criminal Procedure Act. The court therefore concluded that this was a case of online hate speech, but the commentator was not penalized due to the statute of limitations.

### 2. Hateful online comment (2011)

“Oh, please ... this is sick, nature played a trick on them ... they have to be isolated and quarantined and the problem is solved and then gassed ... kiiiiiiiiiiiiiii thee gaayyyy!!!!!!!”

The author of this hateful online comment was assigned 50 hours of community service as part of an out-of-court settlement of a criminal case (decision of the State Prosecutor's Office in Celje, 24. 9. 2011).

### 3. Svetlana Makarovič's statement against Roman Catholic Church on the Siol.net website (6th of January 2012)

“There are things one must hate. In my opinion, the Catholic Church in Slovenia is something one must hate. I consider this to be my civic duty.”

As this was not a criminal offence, the police and the prosecution dismissed all charges. After the investigation of the intolerant speech, the crime investigator in Ljubljana concluded that there was no basis for a criminal complaint and notified the competent prosecutor's office.

### 4. A hateful comment on a news portal (2011)

The perpetrator posted a comment on the Siol.net website under the article *What the Ghanaian coach said after their defeat to Uruguay*: “I am also sorry that the monkeys did not advance. There were obviously not enough bananas.”

The prosecutor's office has agreed to a deferred prosecution in the exchange of the fulfilment of a certain requirement (payment of 100 EUR to a non-governmental organization).

#### 5. Hate messages on posters (2014)

The suspect had several posters next to his house with the following captions: “[J] vermin the old communists must be killed”, “the communists must be killed”, “we must imprison communist and take everything from them Yeltsins! They have brought the country to the brink of collapse,” “we must imprison the tycoons and give their money to the pensioners.”

The prosecutor wrote in the indictment that he thereby publicly incited and stirred up hatred and intolerance based on political and other beliefs and wealth and did so in a manner that disturbed public order and peace and using threats and insults; that the content disturbed the passers-by; and therefore, a report was made to the police. She proposed a suspended sentence of four months' imprisonment, which will not be imposed, if the accused does not commit a new crime during the two-year probation period. The court issued a punitive order in accordance with the prosecutor's motion.

#### 6. A comment under an article on news portal 24ur (2013)

Under the article on 24ur.com entitled They are facing imprisonment for their insulting chanting, the suspect under a nickname wrote: „knife stake jesenovac- kill the Serb so the Turk doesn't have a son, here comes the dawn, here comes the day, here are Jure and Boban, here are brothers the Bosnian Muslims :)))”, “just for you, the Serb, one more: I remember ... it was a beautiful sunny day..I ate a Serbian baby in the sauce made from mother's tears :) Copy it to your mom)))”, “well, look ... if he, a Serb, can write knife wire Srebrenica I can write back the same..but you Serbs are not okay with that or what!???”. His comment was an answer to another commentator, who wrote: “KNIFE WIRE SREBRENICA” and “have you heard that joke before: How do children in Srebrenica sleep? As slaughtered babies, trololo.”

The prosecutor noted in the indictment that the defendant thereby publicly incited and stirred up hatred and intolerance based on nationality, race, religion, or ethnicity, in a manner that may endanger or disturb public order and peace; that his comments go beyond a measure of good taste, as recent history is well known, and it doesn't take much to boil over again on a national basis that is not essential for the prosperity and happiness of mankind. He proposed a sentence of two years' probation and one month's incarceration.

The court found the defendant guilty of publicly inciting and stirring up hatred and intolerance based on nationality, race, religion, or ethnicity, and of committing the act in a manner that may endanger or disturb public order. In determining the sentence, the court accepted the prosecutor's motion.

### 7. A comment in a Facebook group (2010)

In a Facebook group named Giving children to same-sex partners?! NO! NOT IN SLOVENIA! the suspect wrote a comment: “these two-phasers should be burned at the stakes... Hitler would clean this up quickly...”

The prosecutor wrote in the indictment that the accused thereby publicly incited and stirred up hatred towards male homosexuals. He proposed the imposition of a suspended sentence of two months' imprisonment, which will not be imposed if the accused does not commit a new crime within two years. The court accepted the prosecutor's proposal when issuing the penal order.

## 3.2. CRITICAL MEDIA LITERACY

(for 3rd and 4th grade secondary school students)

Subjects and correlations:	Croatian language, media culture, Psychology, Sociology, Ethics, cross-curricular topics of Civic Education and Personal and Social Development.
Objectives:	to bring students closer to the process of creating stereotypes and prejudices through the media; encourage students to understand the consequences of media reports on individuals, groups, and society; encourage the development of students' analytical and critical thinking.
Outcomes (Students will):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• be able to recognize stereotypes and hate speech in media reports</li><li>• develop an understanding of creating negative images of other/ different people</li><li>• be able to analyse the phenomena of harmful speech/reports in the media</li><li>• improve critical thinking skills</li></ul>
Methods:	presentation, group analysis of media texts, discussion
Duration:	90 minutes (double classes)
Material:	examples from the publication "Hate Narratives in Online Media and Communication" <sup>40</sup> ( <a href="#">linked</a> ) and the introduction of this publication.

<sup>40</sup> Lalić S., Senta C. (2020.), Narativi mržnje u internetskim medijima i internetskoj komunikaciji, Zagreb, Centre for Peace Studies

## PRE-ACTIVITY (15 MIN)

The teacher reminds the students what stereotypes, prejudices and hate speech are and gives examples of each concept. If the terminology has not been covered before, a more thorough presentation should be made.

## ACTIVITY (40 MIN)

The teacher explains the role of the media and the types of media present today, as well as their characteristics, and elicits from the students which media and social media they use most often.

After that the students read and analyse case studies from the publication "Narratives of Hate in Online Media and Communication" in small groups (4-5 students). Each group is presented with one case study (refugees and other migrants, political opposition, Roma, journalists). Their task is to single out examples that they have noticed/recognized in their own environment and to discuss and conclude how hate speech affects their group and society as a whole.

*Depending on the subject or cross-curricular topic the workshop is correlated to, two out of four examples of groups to which hate speech is directed towards can be selected, e.g. journalists and political opposition for Politics and Economy or Roma and refugees for media culture etc.*

## POST-ACTIVITY (25 MIN)

Students present (one student from each group) the main conclusions. The teacher leads a short discussion and valorisation related to new knowledge they have gained and poses the question of what the media should and could do to improve their reporting practices without putting the mentioned groups in an unfavourable position (or some other groups if identified in the discussion).

Assignment for students (homework) – find an example of reproduction of prejudices and stereotypes or hate speech in the media and offer a few possible counter-arguments that are within the scope of freedom of speech.

### 3.3. HATE SPEECH ONLINE FOR PARENTS

Talking about the Internet and activities on social media with children might be confusing for parents, since there is a widespread thought that children are superior in understanding the logic and interface of the Internet or are better in managing technology. However, although it may be true that children find it easier to surf through the Internet and to find information online, they are usually not equipped enough to find relevant information online, for fact-checking and for thinking critically about the information. This is also true for older children such as adolescents. Although adolescents have the same cognitive capacities as adults, they lack the experience and knowledge about certain phenomena in order to act in the right way.

Adolescents, by nature of their development period, seek approval from their peers, but they also seek support from their parents. Therefore, this is the aspect within which parents could have great influence on developing humanistic values in their children in order to prevent child's support of radical ideologies or spreading hate speech. This could be done by educating children from the young age to be empathetic towards others, to be respectful and ready to play with other children who are different. A beneficial activity is also to learn with children about different countries and cultures in a way which is evoking their curiosity. With older children talking about human rights and discrimination is, of course, highly beneficial as well.

On the other hand, a frequent concern of many parents is whether their child will be a victim of prejudices, hate speech or discrimination. This concern became even more common with high usage of the Internet and social media where there is no editor who will 'filter' this kind of content for their children. Many parents, being afraid that their child will run into harmful content, decide to forbid media exposure. However, this method is being shown as inadequate since the Internet is widespread around us and present in every area of life. In this way, a search for new methods of child protection is seen as necessary.

Schools could have a role in supporting the parents by educating them about hate speech, giving advice on how to talk to their children about the events in their life, how to get familiar with the child's activity online, and also by including them in school projects about hate speech prevention.

There are several actions through which parents could be supported:

- **Educating parents about hate speech online and mechanisms of hate speech sanctioning.** Since school already has an important role of educating students about human rights and hate speech, education of parents might seem too ambitious for many schools' capacities limited by time and other necessary activities regarding education in the first place. Because of that, the education of parents about hate speech could be done shortly through certain meetings



in which teachers could point out the need for parents to enhance humanistic values in their children, and to prevent them from spreading hate speech or from discrimination of other children. This kind of short crash course regarding hate speech could be done with children, too. For example, a teacher might give a child a certain educational source to read as homework and emphasize that it is supposed to do it with its parents. Another way is also to provide the parents with links, texts, guidelines and other educational sources for them to inform and educate themselves. An important factor that should be included in the education of parents is providing them with the information to whom they can turn to if hate speech actually occurs in their families.

- **Moderating joint meetings of children and their parents.**

Schools, or every teacher responsible for a certain class, could organize joint meetings with children and their parents where a certain topic, such as hate speech, will be dealt with and discussed. In that way, this meeting will be educational for children, as well as for parents, and it will be valuable for their bonding, and learning how to speak about crucial phenomena in an adolescent's life. These meetings could be also organized as debates between children on the one side and parents on the other. Either way, the moderation of a teacher or a school's psychologist will be necessary. A guest lecturer from the media, or some other profession relevant for the topic, could be also included.

- **Stressing to parents the need to talk with their child about the events in its life.**

The second action on supporting parents is linked to education as well, and it concerns accentuating the need for them to talk with their children about the events in their lives. Although many parents might find communication with their adolescent difficult, it should be pointed out that adolescents, as vulnerable as they are at that age, need their support and attention.

- **Giving advice to parents on how they could be familiar with their child's activity online.**

The third way for supporting the parents would tie in to the previously mentioned one, and it would be regarding the need for them to be familiar with what kind of websites the child is visiting, to whom they talk to online, and whether they have certain issues that they want to talk about. Parents should be guided to have in mind that, by talking to their children, they could be involved and familiar with their activity online, and, in the same way, respect their privacy, which is extremely important to adolescents.

- **Including parents in school's activities regarding hate speech and human rights projects.**

When realizing school projects about human rights, discrimination and hate speech, as well as many others, a school should aim to include parents in these activities in some way. This could be very useful for developing good relationships between the school and the teachers towards parents, and, in the same way, it could be very beneficial to the parent-child bonding as well. In this way, schools could also fulfil the role of parents' education about hate speech, recommended in the first item.

### 3.4. HATE SPEECH ONLINE FOR SCHOOL STAFF

A school should be a place where all differences shall be respected, and any discrimination won't be tolerated. This is envisaged by the United Nation's Declaration of the Rights of the Child by the principle 7 and 10:

*The child is entitled to receive education, which shall be free and compulsory, at least in the elementary stages. He shall be given an education which will promote his general culture and enable him, on a basis of equal opportunity, to develop his abilities, his individual judgement, and his sense of moral and social responsibility, and to become a useful member of society (Principle 7).*

*The child shall be protected from practices which may foster racial, religious and any other form of discrimination. He shall be brought up in a spirit of understanding, tolerance, friendship among peoples, peace and universal brotherhood, and in full consciousness that his energy and talents should be devoted to the service of his fellow men (Principle 10).<sup>41</sup>*

In this way, schools are officially obliged to promote tolerance and acceptance between their students. Because of that, teachers have to be educated regarding hate speech. The aim is to be able to recognize hate speech, not to be prone to subtle forms of discrimination, and to cherish tolerance in class. In a certain sense, teachers should serve as an example to their students which means that teachers themselves have to be respectful and tolerant. Teachers should educate themselves by attending workshops or trainings on human rights, discrimination and/or hate speech, or to learn on their own about these topics using many educational resources such as webinars, guidelines, publications, etc. which are available online, as well as be familiar with regulations.

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<sup>41</sup> United Nations (UN). (1989). Declaration of the rights of the child. Geneva: UN. Available at: <https://cpd.org.rs/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/1959-Declaration-of-the-Rights-of-the-Child.pdf>.

### 3.5. HATE SPEECH AROUND US: DEVELOPING A SCHOOL PROJECT

One way to learn about hate speech is learning ‘through human rights’ which means including all actors in the school in making the school a safe place where every difference shall be respected, and any tolerance for hate speech won’t be given. Learning ‘through human rights’ emphasizes building school as a system in which human rights are respected, meaning that teachers themselves are treating all students equally, for example. This could also be encouraged by realizing a certain school project about hate speech and human rights. This project would mean that all students, teachers and professional associates such as educationalists and psychologists are included in the project through their activities. In the following lines, some activities about hate speech that could be carried out are:

- Celebrating Human Rights Day (every 10th of December) in the school through different activities.
- Dedicating a whole issue of school papers to the topic of human rights, prejudices and hate speech.
- Making a video in facultative Journalism class about hate speech on the Internet.
- Realizing a play regarding hate speech with the Drama class.
- Making a photo story about different cultures in Photography classes.
- Inviting local journalist to talk about media professionalism, respecting human rights and preventing prejudice in reporting.
- Inviting local activists from CSO’s which are focused on human rights to talk about discrimination and mechanisms of protecting yourself from this kind of acts.
- School’s psychologist visiting classes and implementing workshops with children on stereotypes, prejudice and hate speech.
- School’s psychologist providing support to the children who are currently victims of hate speech online.
- School’s psychologist realizing a workshop using methods of psychodrama in which students should use spontaneous dramatization and role play in order to understand how the victims of the hate speech and discrimination might feel.
- Students keeping ‘Hate speech diary’ which means that they could write their encounters online with violence, bullying, discrimination, stereotypes, prejudice, and hate speech. They should be encouraged to write their feelings and actions when facing them. This can be discussed during homeroom classes.
- Realize a series of activities on the topic of “Walking a mile in another man’s shoes” in which students exercise empathy towards specific vulnerable groups such as migrants, refugees, LGBT and others. They could write essays or organize discussions in which students should imagine themselves in the same situation. Then they could share how they think they would feel and how they would like for others to act towards them.
- Talking about hate speech, prejudices and bullying during homeroom classes.

- Dedicating a class to discussion about hate speech through different subjects from different angles. For example:
  - To talk about hate speech on social media in Computer Science classes through learning about safe websites, social media algorithms, etc.,
  - To write an essay on the consequences of hate speech in Native language or Literature classes when studying “The Diary of Anne Frank”,
  - To discuss about psychological effects of being a hate speech or discrimination victim in Psychology classes when studying about psychology of groups or attitudes,
  - To talk about human rights and hate speech sanctions in the Constitution and citizen’s rights classes when learning about basic human rights and the rule of law,
  - To talk about prevention, responsible citizenship and mechanisms to report hate speech in Civic Education classes,
  - To talk about the humanistic aspect of human rights and discrimination based on religion in Religion Education classes,
  - To talk about the role of the media in fighting and legitimizing hate speech in public discourse in Language, Media and Culture classes,
  - To talk about famous anti-war paintings and artworks appeared as artists’ response to the wars in XX century in Art classes,
  - To talk about illogical mistakes and arguments used in propaganda and hate speech in Philosophy classes,
  - To talk about nationalism and anti-Semitism in Sociology classes when studying nation, race and ethics or social inequality,
  - To talk about hate speech and anti-Semitism in History classes when studying WWII,
  - To talk about cherishing different cultures in Language classes,
  - Etc.

All of these activities could be realized by the school and organized one time within a certain period or realized individually in accordance with the curriculum through the whole year. The crucial thing is that the school system and teachers are educated and tolerant enough to make the learning surroundings free from any discrimination and to carry out the topic of hate speech in accordance with the subject they are teaching.

BOHAVE

PREVENTING HATE  
SPEECH ONLINE



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