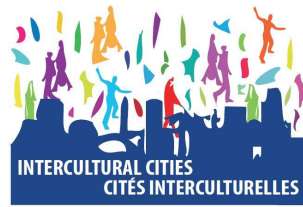




AGENDA
2030
TRANSFORMING REGIONS
CHANGING THE WORLD



Draft concept note

Workshop on People

Agenda 2030: Transforming Regions, Changing the World
Hate speech: towards a comprehensive approach

Co-organised with the Council of Europe within the framework of the Intercultural Regions initiative and the Includ-EU Project

Date and time: 29 October 10:30-11:30

Venue: Maison Région Grand Est (1 Pl. Adrien Zeller, 67000 Strasbourg, France) and Online

Room: Hemicycle

About the event

Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals matter now more than ever, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development can shed some light on the COVID-19-pandemic crisis, and outline the path towards recovery. **The goal of this Conference is to show that local and regional authorities play a key role in facilitating the transformation needed to successfully implement and reach the Sustainable Development Goals, in order to achieve sustainable and resilient societies.**

The Assembly of European Regions is committed to keeping the Agenda 2030 at the top of its priorities. Throughout 2020 and 2021 AER has been working along with its partners to advocate the global and European agenda for ensuring the representation of regions when it comes to the implementation and elaboration of sustainable development strategies.

1. Background

Building sustainable cities and communities is not only about environmental impact and infrastructure, it is also about investing in cohesion, equality and demographic stability. The “community” part of SDG 11 is key as the sense of belonging and social trust are a guarantee for cities' continued well-being and prosperity. In today's increasingly mobile and diverse world, cities and regions should make the positive and effective management of diversity an integral part of good governance. Intercultural integration is a pioneering policy approach that gives cities and regions the tools to manage diversity as a resource for sustainable development.



The project is funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund of the European Union



Intercultural
Regions
Network

For instance, **dealing with hate speech is an example of managing diversity for achieving sustainable and inclusive communities as stated in Sustainable Development Goal 11.**

Hate speech is as old as humanity. Throughout history, its harmful effects for individuals and for community cohesion have been contained by ethical rules and by institutional and media gatekeepers that limited the spread of hateful expression. **Internet and social media have created a new situation where hate speech can spread at the speed of light**, reach vast amounts of people and lead to violence, self-harm, political upheaval, and generalised hostility.

Old tools for dealing with hate speech such as self-regulation for media, ethical charters for political parties, and even criminal prosecution are insufficient. We need stronger legislation defining criminal, civil and administrative liabilities, as well as the responsibilities of different state and non-state actors in the prevention, education, support for and empowerment of victims, as well as for effective content moderation online. **Different kinds of hate speech require different legal responses.**

We will not succeed unless we adopt a systemic approach that focuses on prevention to strengthen resilience against the toxic messaging and falsehood underlying hate speech in our society. This requires a genuine commitment by the states and cooperation with other stakeholders, such as NGOs, the media sector, and cultural and educational institutions to promote intercultural competence and understanding, critical thinking, information literacy, and a human rights culture.

Comprehensive strategies should also include judicial redress including effective law enforcement. Supporting victims to report hate speech and providing effective follow-up to these reports increase trust in institutions, knowing that something can be done about it. It also helps understand the scope of hate speech phenomena and guide policy planning and concrete initiatives to prevent/limit it in the future at national, regional and local level. **Comprehensive strategies against help speech include self-regulatory mechanisms** such as enforceable codes of conduct for political parties etc. that all contribute to the same goal – **eliminate hate speech from the public space be it online or offline.**

3. Objectives

This workshop co-organised by the Council of Europe, within the framework of the Intercultural Regions initiative and the Includ-EU Project (co-funded by the AMIF Programme of the European Union) will introduce the **key strategies for addressing hate speech in a multi-level, multi-stakeholder perspective and focus on specific actions and initiatives which could be undertaken at the regional level.**

4. Format

The length of the debate will be of **1 hour.**

Moderation by Ms Irena Guidikova, Head of Inclusion and Antidiscrimination programmes at the Council of Europe.

- **Introduction – 10 min**

The moderator welcomes the audience/speakers. Introduces the speaker.
Briefly introduces the topic, explaining the different levels of hate speech; and presents the objectives of the workshop.

- **Open debate with the audience – 30 min**

Moderator invites the audience to share their experience in fighting hate speech in their daily work, and what they struggle with the most.

- **Speaker intervention – 15 min**

Ms Julia Mozer, Communication & Policy Officer at CEJI, shares resources that can be used by participants to address the issues they struggle with the most.

- **Wrap up / End of debate – 5 min**

Moderator wraps up the discussion.