

Call for participants for the Training of Trainers on preventing hate speech through awareness raising and education

3-6 February 2026 (working days), Strasbourg

The Council of Europe is launching a call to take part in the training of trainers on preventing hate speech through awareness raising and education. The training is directed at multipliers who are in a position to further build capacity and assist civil society organisations and other stakeholders in using counter and alternative narratives (CANs) and human rights education (HRE). The training consists of introduction and exploration of the theoretical and policy frameworks on combating hate speech, as well as practical application of CANs and HRE as tools to prevent and combat hate speech.

Furthermore, the training fosters the creation of a community of practice, an informal network of multipliers who will be available to support different organisations, equality bodies, regulators, national public institutions and other stakeholders. These multipliers will also have the role of bringing the work on CANs closer to all those interested to take action against hate speech through public communication and engagement of wider audiences.

Deadline for application: 1 December 2025

Background

The [New Democratic Pact for Europe](#), initiated by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, seeks to boost solutions that work and create new responses to reinforce Democracy, amplify its benefits, and innovate its form to make it tangible for everyone, especially younger generations. This Pact highlights the importance of democratic security, safeguarding the values that form the foundation of democratic societies. Hate speech puts these values at risk. The rise of hate speech, setbacks in gender equality and women's rights and attacks on minority rights highlight the urgent need for renewed commitments. Furthermore, democratic participation relies on equal access and inclusion, yet racism, religious intolerance and anti-LGBTI attitudes continue to undermine this principle. These forms of discrimination fuel hate speech, exclusion and barriers to meaningful engagement in public life, disproportionately affecting marginalised groups¹.

The Council of Europe adopted in 2022 the Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2022\)16](#) on Combating Hate Speech setting out legal and non-legal measures against hate speech. The Recommendation among others, directs national authorities, CSOs, online platforms and other stakeholders to co-operate on countering online manifestations of hate speech, including through educational, awareness-raising and counter-speech efforts.

¹ [Report of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe](#), Towards a New Democratic Pact for Europe, 2025

The Council of Europe continuously co-operates with EU agencies and other international organisations, including through the EU High Level Group on combating hate speech and hate crime. In the framework of this High-Level Group, the Council of Europe is co-facilitating a workstream on hate speech and hate crime prevention which explores ways to improve public information and awareness of risks that hate speech and hate crime pose, as well as the available reporting and redress mechanisms for the general public and groups at risk of hate victimisation.

In the framework of the project "WE CAN for human rights speech" funded by the European Union's Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (2014-2020) and the Council of Europe, an [online toolkit](#) was set up to equip multipliers with easy to use tools, checklists and resources. The toolkit takes a step-by-step approach to guide the application of counter and alternative narratives which promote human rights and democratic principles that push back against hate speech and discriminatory narratives. Furthermore, research in the effectiveness of CANs and promising practices is an evolving field and the course will closely reflect on the results of a recent [study on effectiveness risks and potentials of using counter and alternative narratives in combating hate speech](#). One of the study conclusions is that CANs appear to be the most effective when they directly engage with people, preferably physically in addition to online, with a strong emotional appeal, direct communication, and calls to action. CAN campaigns must be planned and take into consideration type of audience and engagement that there tends to be on a given platform. These and other principles have been brought together in the recent publication on Key Guiding Principles on Public Campaigning against Hate Speech and Hate Crime, developed by the Ministry of Interior of Austria and the European Commission.

These resources will inform the training of trainers, enabling trainees to reflect on how to apply combination of different awareness raising and education initiatives. The programme will also facilitate joint discussions on tools and methods which can be used in preventing hate speech and hate crime.

The Training course is one of the key activities of the joint EU-Council of Europe project "[Increasing civil society organisations' knowledge and capacity to counter hate speech online](#)" which aims to improve the multistakeholder cooperation and coordination among civil society organisations (CSOs), public authorities and other stakeholders, enhancing their response to hate speech online using legal and non-legal measures. Participants from donor and beneficiary countries of the EEA and Norway Grants may be supported through the [Enhancing multi-stakeholder responses to hate speech and hate crime – EEA and Norway Grants' Mission-Driven Initiative](#).

The training of trainers

The Anti-Discrimination Department and other Council of Europe services, as well as the wider community of practice which includes CSOs, academia, local and national authorities and tech companies often rely on multipliers (consultants, trainers and experts) to build capacity and support the implementation of the measures to address hate speech. It is therefore essential that the multipliers are fully aware of the recent developments regarding Council of Europe's standards and approaches to combating hate speech and its implications for the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders in society.

The training of trainers will maintain a strong link between the Council of Europe and the EU standards, the educational approaches in addressing hate speech, the existing tools for building CANs and the methodological tools to conduct follow-up training activities. Therefore, the course would gather multipliers working on combating hate speech, educators, consultants and experts working on

standards on fighting discrimination and hate speech, and activists using education and counter-narratives for awareness-raising against hate speech. Invited participants should be in a position to use the gained competences through delivering educational and awareness-raising activities as trainers for national or European level organisations working on this topic or for the Council of Europe's cooperation programmes.

Aim and objectives

The training course aims to strengthen the competences (knowledge, skills and practical application) of multipliers, consultants, trainers and experts interested in promoting the Council of Europe standards and approaches to combating hate speech, through the use of counter and alternative narratives and human rights education.

Objectives:

1. To improve the understanding of Council of Europe standards and approaches to ensure a comprehensive approach to combating hate speech within a human rights framework.
2. To build capacity in applying educational tools and counter narratives based on human rights and act as a multiplier to guide CSOs and other stakeholders in consistently applying CANs in their work.
3. To encourage an active role as trainers in supporting the implementation of various measures to combat hate speech and promote Council of Europe standards through multi-stakeholder engagement.

Methodology of the training course

The training of trainers is consisted of four full days of residential training course programme, as well as some preparatory reading before and after the course. The training course methodology will be non-formal and participatory. The programme will include expert inputs on Council of Europe standards, approaches and its practical application, participatory sessions based on human rights education to combat hate speech, participatory sessions on the awareness raising and educational approaches in combating hate speech, understanding of principles of building CANs and human rights narratives and practical tools for training other multipliers in applying CANs in their work on combating hate speech.

The course is prepared by an international group of trainers – experts from CSOs and with inputs from other stakeholders where applicable.

Financial and practical conditions for participation

Travel expenses

Travel expenses for the training of trainers will be covered according to the rules of the Council of Europe. The payment of per-diems will be made by bank transfer after the activity.

Accommodation

Board and lodging for the training will be provided and paid for by the Council of Europe at the European Youth Centre Strasbourg. The European Youth Centres are accessible to people with disabilities and can take measures to accommodate for any specific needs of participants in this respect. Please provide the necessary information in your application form.

Working languages

English will be the working language of the training course. Participants are required to be able to express themselves autonomously in English.

Profile of participants

The Council of Europe is particularly inviting multipliers who are able to further build capacity and assist various stakeholders involved in preventing hate speech and hate crimes, notably civil society organisations, public authorities, local and regional authorities, equality bodies, media and others in using CANs and human rights education.

It will select some 20 participants based on their experience and potential to work as trainers, experts or consultants to take part in the course. A waiting list may be established.

The applicants for this training of trainers should ideally fulfil the following selection criteria:

1. Based and actively working in Council of Europe member states.
2. Demonstrate potential to act as multiplier with a support letter from a nominating CSO, national or local authorities, equality bodies and regulators, academic institution or other private entity engaged in countering hate speech. The support letter should be sent to nohate@coe.int
3. Some prior experience in human rights education and non-formal education based on the Council of Europe's approaches is an asset.
4. Some theoretical knowledge and experience with the Council of Europe standards for combating hate speech (European Convention of Human Rights, ECRI's General Policy Recommendations and relevant Committee of Ministers Recommendations) is an asset.
5. Experience in working on projects addressing hate speech within different contexts; and with different stakeholders is an asset.
6. Ability to work in English.

The Council of Europe welcomes applications from all candidates who fulfil the specific profile of the activities, irrespective of gender, disability, marital or parental status, racial, ethnic or social origin, age, colour, religion, belief or sexual orientation.

Priority will be given to multipliers engaged in topics relevant for the Anti-Discrimination Department (working on equality including gender equality, inclusion of LGBTI persons, minorities, Roma and migrants). The Council of Europe will try to respect the nominating organisations' priorities, but also to needs to ensure a balance between genders, geographical regions, different types of experiences, cultural backgrounds and organisations, institutions and projects.

How to apply to this call

All candidates must apply on-line through the form provided [at this link](#).

The support letter from the nominating organisation/institution can be sent to nohate@coe.int

The application form must be submitted on-line before 23:59(CET), 1 December 2025 on <https://forms.office.com/e/2YHx0Q3M0Q>

For further information, please contact nohate@coe.int