



DIRECTORATE OF COMMUNICATIONS

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New Council of Europe Campaign : *Free to Speak, Safe to Learn – Democratic Schools for All*

The Council of Europe is launching its new campaign for schools from 14-16 November in Oslo, Norway.

[Free to Speak, Safe to Learn – Democratic Schools for All](#) focuses on making sure that children and young people at school feel safe, so that they can learn and explore even the most controversial points of view, so that opinions which might lead to discrimination, hate speech or bullying – or even veer into violent extremism – can be safely challenged, rather than being driven underground.

This requires that schools are democratic places and that everyone – from pupils and students to teachers, school leaders, parents and members of the local community – respects human rights and has the competences they need to function effectively in a democratic society.

These competences form the basis of the Council of Europe's **Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture**, which will be implemented in Europe's schools during the campaign.

Journalists as well as policy makers, schoolchildren, education professionals, researchers and experts from across Europe are invited to the launch, which will take place during the 10th anniversary ceremony of the [European Wergeland Centre](#).

There are six campaign themes:

- making childrens' and students' voices heard;
- addressing controversial issues;
- preventing violence and bullying;
- dealing with propaganda, misinformation and fake news;
- tackling discrimination; and,
- improving well-being at school.

The campaign, in partnership with the European Wergeland Centre, will run for four years (2018-2022) at national, regional and European level. It involves 50 states across Europe; the Council of Europe's 47 member states as well as Belarus, the Holy See and Kazakhstan, as additional parties to the Organisation's [European Cultural Convention](#).

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