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Seminar on Combatting Antisemitic Hate Speech

European Youth Centre Strasbourg, 9-11 May 2017

Report

In cooperation with campaign partners:
European Union of Jewish Students (EUJS),
CEJI a Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe,
European Network Against Racism (ENAR),
Ligue Internationale Contre le Racisme et l'Antisémitisme (LICRA)
Media Diversity Institute (MDI)

Report of the Seminar on Combatting Antisemitic Hate Speech

European Youth Centre Strasbourg, 9-11 May 2017

The views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Council of Europe.

This report provides an account of the discussions, experiences and practices shared by participants, speakers and organisers of the seminar.

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Executive Summary

The seminar on Antisemitic Hate Speech was held at the European Youth Centre Strasbourg between 8 and 11 May 2017 bringing together 41 participants from 19 countries including activists, national campaign coordinators of the No Hate Speech Movement, educators, youth leaders, NGO representatives, and Council of Europe officials.

The seminar was organised in cooperation with campaign partners: EUJS - European Union of Jewish Students, CEJI - A Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe, ENAR - European Network Against Racism, LICRA - International League against Racism and Anti-Semitism, and MDI - Media Diversity Institute.

By the end of the three days, the participants had discussed fundamental concepts related to antisemitism and hate speech. Activists and other actors reinforced and reconfirmed their commitment to promote human rights and to make further efforts to fight antisemitic hate speech.

The seminars resulted in:

- Empowerment of the participants in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes to recognise antisemitism and antisemitic hate speech and to combat it effectively;
- Increased visibility of existing tools that aim to raise awareness of or take action on (antisemitic) hate speech;
- Understanding of actions taken by the Council of Europe and European Commission bodies on antisemitism and willingness to engage with them;
- Plan of actions for the Action Day countering antisemitic hate speech on 9 November to be taken by the participants and their organisations;
- A set of conclusions and recommendations for relevant stakeholders.

About this report:

This report aims to give a summary of the main issues presented at the seminar in a synoptic and complete manner, including the activities carried out, speeches of guest speakers, examples of good practice shared, recommendations of participants for follow-up and ways to continue the combat against antisemitic hate speech online and offline.

Introduction

The No Hate Speech Movement (NHSM)¹ is a youth campaign for human rights online run by the Council of Europe's youth sector to combat racism and discrimination in its online expression of hate speech by equipping young people and youth organisations with the competences necessary to recognise and act against such human rights violations. Launched in 2013, the campaign was prolonged in May 2015 till the end of 2017 in the framework of the Action Plan on the fight against violent extremism and radicalisation leading to terrorism of the Council of Europe.

One of the thematic foci of the campaign in 2016-2017 is antisemitic hate speech. The national campaign committees, online activists and educators have observed a growing number of expressions of antisemitic hate speech along with hate speech targeting other cultural and religious minority groups.

Present day expressions of antisemitism by politicians and in mainstream media often are not obvious. But populist movements continue to invoke centuries-old myths and conspiracy theories about Jewish influence on world affairs when criticising established institutions, media companies and charities that work in the area of non-discrimination and promotion of human rights. Antisemitic hate speech is often also invoked in relation to the war in Syria and the Israeli- Palestinian conflict.²

The Internet has provided new platforms for antisemitic hate speech to evolve and spread, commenting on present day challenges with quick fix solutions that single out minority groups as the problem to be dealt with. Such rhetoric builds on pre-existing stereotypes about such minority groups, be them Jewish, Muslim, Roma, LGBTI, disabled or any other groups that are deemed inferior or "different". The dissemination of such rhetoric online allows for stereotypes to reach a wide audience. It is important to take action to prevent harmful stereotypes from spreading and leading to hatred, discrimination, racism and violence.

The seminar represented an important cooperation moment between the campaign partners EUJS, CEJI, ENAR, LICRA and MDI³, their members, national campaigns and the Youth Department of the Council of Europe. It strengthened their capacity to respond to antisemitic hate speech online through human rights education and the dissemination of effective human rights narratives within the framework of the No Hate Speech Movement.

¹ For more information see the campaign platform: www.nohatespeechmovement.org

² See also the findings of [European Commission against Racism and Intolerance](https://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/activities/Annual_Reports/Annual%20report%202015.pdf) in its 2015 annual report at https://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/activities/Annual_Reports/Annual%20report%202015.pdf

³ For more information see EUJS: www.eujs.org; CEJI: www.ceji.org; ENAR: www.enar-eu.org; LICRA: www.licra.org; MDI: www.media-diversity.org

Seminar objectives

The seminar aimed to provide a space for participants to share experiences with and learn about manifestations of antisemitism in Europe today, and identify ways of effectively addressing it, notably through the No Hate Speech Movement.

The seminar had the following objectives:

- To promote a shared understanding of antisemitism and its expression in online hate speech;
- To share strategies and approaches to counter antisemitic hate speech;
- To devise projects and initiatives to address antisemitic hate speech through the No Hate Speech Movement and identify measures for member states and other stakeholders to effectively act against antisemitic hate speech online;
- To support coalition building and common actions between youth, human rights and media organisations to combat antisemitic hate speech;
- To bring the combat against antisemitism through human rights education with young people in the Council of Europe and its member states.

The partners

The Seminar was organised in cooperation with five campaign partners:

- European Union of Jewish Students (EUJS): umbrella organization for 34 national Jewish student unions in Europe;
- CEJI a Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe: NGO based in Brussels, working in the field of diversity education and anti-discrimination advocacy;
- European Network Against Racism (ENAR): pan-European anti-racism network of organisations combatting racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance;
- Ligue Internationale Contre le Racisme et l'Antisémitisme (LICRA): French organisation opposed to intolerance, xenophobia and exclusion and fighting neo-Nazism and Holocaust denial;
- Media Diversity Institute (MDI): international organisation working to prevent the media from intentionally or unintentionally spreading prejudice, intolerance and hatred.

Programme and working methods

The three-day programme allowed participants to learn about antisemitism and hate speech, share their practices and experience, identify challenges and opportunities, and work towards a common approach and actions within the campaign to counter antisemitic hate speech. The programme was bilingual, with French-English interpretation.

The formal programme included the following main elements:

- Speeches and presentations by Council of Europe representatives, campaign partners, and experts
- non-formal and participatory activities commonly used in human rights education
- Working groups and plenary discussions
- Other activities, including social events.

The programme of the Seminar was divided into three phases:

1. Understanding antisemitism and antisemitic hate speech

These sessions provided participants with the opportunity to explore their own perceptions, attitudes, impressions of Jews and Judaism in their context, discuss myths, and learn about the 'language' and symbolism of antisemitic hate speech. They looked at ways to assess the gravity of hate speech and to differentiate antisemitic hate speech from anti-Israel discourse.

2. Taking action against antisemitic hate speech

The nature and forms of antisemitic hate speech were further explored, and related work of the Council of Europe and the European Commission was reviewed. Furthermore, approaches and good practices of civil society organisations to address antisemitic hate speech were shared and discussed. The structure and working of hateful narratives as well as ways to deconstruct them and respond with alternative or counter narratives were also explored.

Speakers included:

- **Matthew Johnson**, Director of the Directorate for Democratic Citizenship and Participation of the Council of Europe;
- **Paul Iganski**, Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice at the Lancaster University Law school;
- **Giorgio Loddo**, Secretariat to the General Rapporteur on combating racism and intolerance, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe;
- **Stefano Valenti**, European Commission against Racism and Intolerance of the Council of Europe;
- **Sebastian Mangrau**, Advisor, Office of the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights; and
- **Katharina von Schnurbein**, Coordinator on combating antisemitism, European Commission.

3. Recommendations for further action on antisemitic hate speech

The seminar concluded with interactive group sessions to draw recommendations for future actions to combat antisemitism and antisemitic hate speech by various stakeholders, including European institutions, national authorities, campaign partners, civil society organisations, and individuals.

Finally, the participants formulated ideas and recommended actions for the Action Day countering antisemitic hate speech on 9 November 2017 focusing on the following types of actions: expressions of solidarity; offline actions; presenting facts and figures through infographics; educational activities; publication of articles; and images, memes, and videos.

Understanding antisemitism and hate speech

During the seminar perceptions and stereotypes about Judaism and Jewish people were discussed and the concepts of antisemitism and hate speech were explored, building on a widely accepted definition of antisemitism adopted by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). The participants discussed how these issues are related to human rights and democracy, and analysed current manifestations of antisemitism and hate speech, comparing present daily realities against historical examples. Differences between illegal speech and abusive speech, and between antisemitic hate speech and criticism of state policies of Israel were highlighted.

Why taking action on antisemitism is important

The Seminar was officially opened by **Rui Gomes**, Head of the Education and Training Division at the Youth Department, welcoming all the participants and organising partners on behalf of the Council of Europe.

In his address Mr Gomes pointed out that this Seminar is part of the Council of Europe's NHSM campaign and its general work to uphold human rights, democracy and tolerance in Europe. It is, in a way, a continuation of a previous endeavour of the Council of Europe to denounce discrimination, namely the 'All different – All equal' campaign in 1994-1996, followed by a second campaign, using the same slogan and logo, to fight against all forms of discrimination in 2006-2008.

Antisemitic hate speech is a violation of human rights, democratic values and the principle of equality and dignity. Therefore, it is high time to specifically address this issue, analyse what antisemitism and antisemitic hate speech mean today, raise awareness of antisemitic hate speech, analyse the threats it poses to democracy, society and our future in general, and show solidarity with victims by mobilising, together with campaign partners, young people in Europe for non-discrimination.

The speaker underlined that it is not enough to address problems that are closest and most relevant to our own lives, but we should work together, locally and globally, regardless of what human rights issues become the hottest at a particular time and place, to promote the respect for human rights of all. In Europe, we see grave violations of human rights, and the rise of anti-Europe sentiments is also a concern. The No Hate Speech Movement campaign, planned, organised and carried out by young people, reflects the commitment of the Council of Europe to listen to and work together with young people.

Exploring stereotypes about Judaism and Jews

Through a series of activities facilitated by **Stéphanie Lecesne**, trainer at CEJI, participants reflected on their own memories of images and messages they received from their environments related to Jewish people and Judaism in general, answering the following questions:

1. What kind of images/messages did you receive about Jews and Judaism during childhood?

2. What kind of images/messages did you receive about Jews and Judaism during adolescence?
3. What kind of images/messages did you receive about Jews and Judaism in your adult years?
4. When did you decide (if you decided) that these images/messages were true/untrue?
5. Does your family share the same images/messages? In what ways are they similar/different?

Individual and regional differences in how messages about Jews and Judaism were received and the resulting stereotypes were discussed in small groups. It was pointed out that it often takes a long time for stereotypes to change. Various sources of images were identified including education, especially history lessons at school, books and films, people living in the neighbourhood, and last but not least: family members. Some of the Jewish participants found it difficult to reflect on their own people.

Some of the stereotypes personally faced by the participants at some points in their lives included the following:

- The Jewish are to blame for poverty;
- The Jewish are powerful, leading the world;
- The Jewish are talented, clever, worthy of respect, but they are not good;
- The Jewish are secret controllers of the world (with George Soros being a prototypical influential Jew);

'My mom told me not to play with Jewish kids for the neighbours might frown upon us'
Memory shared by a participant

It was pointed out that positive stereotypes are also limiting as they put people into mental boxes or categories. All people have stereotypes, which influence how they interact with those concerned. It is important to be aware of one's stereotypes and how they emerge and operate.

Antisemitic sentiments and myths have been around for a long time in history. Some common and deep-rooted myths about the Jewish people were analysed with the help of cartoons and historic data. Such historical myths, currently "recycled" in modern propaganda and hate speech, include the following⁴:

- Blood libel: accusation that Jews kidnapped and murdered Christians, especially children, to use their blood for ritual purposes;
- Deicide: belief that the Jewish people are responsible for the death of Jesus;
- Demonization of the Jews: for example blame them for the Black Death in the middle ages or accusing them of having dual loyalty;
- Jewish are money lenders;
- Conspiracy theories: allegations according to which the Jews control the world, including money, media, and political powers.

⁴ See Stéphanie Lecesne's presentation in the Annex

Defining antisemitism

Although personal experiences and historical examples help understand what antisemitism is, it is also important to agree on a shared definition. As a starting point, the definition adopted by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance was presented and discussed.

‘Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.’

International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance

As pointed out in the above definition, non-Jewish persons too can be targets of antisemitic sentiments and actions, e.g. if perceived as Jewish. Antisemitism may stay with us for a long time in the future, since there seems to be a constant demand for scapegoating. But positive experiences and learning can change attitudes. As one participant recalled, he as a child was raised to believe that Jewish and Islamic people are enemies, but as a result of personal experiences and critical thinking he came to the conclusion that it had been a false view.

Differentiating antisemitism from criticism of Israel

The exploration of the concepts of antisemitism and hate speech continued with an activity called ‘*Drawing the Line*’⁵, which allowed the participants to learn and practice how to differentiate between manifestations of anti-Israel criticism and antisemitic hate speech. The activity provides cartoons which appear to criticise policies and political leaders of Israel, but some invoke antisemitic stereotypes. The participants tried to find out what the purpose of each caricature was (ridicule, criticize, pointing out issues, visualise something to convey a message, or something else), and decide if antisemitism is promoted, and why.

The participants reflected that blurring the distinction between criticism of Israel as a nation-state and antisemitism is a common phenomenon. However, it is very important to tell one from the other because:

- Many people are afraid of making comments about Israel because they do not want to be accused of antisemitism;
- Antisemitism often disguises itself in the form of being anti-Israel.

Some of the pictures provoked long and animated discussions as sometimes the participants had found it difficult to agree into which category to put the pictures, not only because of the difficulty of ‘drawing a line’, but because they could not always identify the characters on the pictures or

Hate speech or not?



⁵ Source: Confronter l'antisemitisme activité: Rites et rituels (CEJI manual; not available online)

fully interpret the narrative told by the cartoons. They sensed that these pictures were biased, but found that some references were just not clear to them. Sometimes, when explained what the picture is supposed to depict, they changed their interpretations. At other times, they found it easy to deconstruct the narrative told by the cartoon, but could not agree whether it corresponds to the definition of antisemitism.

Another difficulty faced by some of the participants when considering if a particular cartoon or comment was antisemitic was due to applying a narrow definition of hate speech, including only messages subject to criminal law. In a human rights framework, however, both illegal speech and abusive speech may constitute hate speech. Nevertheless, it is important to differentiate between the two.

As pointed out by a participant, most of our prejudice is unknown to us. Antisemitism or any kind of human rights abuse is not about what we personally think about the Jewish or what we found offending. Racism and other discriminative ideas are spread unnoticed, and may cause violent acts such as attacks against synagogues or other cultural and religious institutions, and may lead to human suffering. Ignoring antisemitic messages and letting them spread carries the risk of people taking them seriously and acting on them, with potentially devastating consequences.

As these caricatures could easily be found online, it is important to be able to recognise the stereotypes, characters, myths related to Judaism, and look for red flags if we want to stand up against antisemitic hate speech. Such red flags include references to old stereotypes, e.g. a politician eating a child. The 4 D's as described below may be helpful in identifying antisemitic hate speech and differentiate it from anti-Israel criticism.

The 4 D's are flags indicating the presence of antisemitism hidden in anti-Israel criticism⁶:

- **Demonization**: when Israel's actions are exaggerated, or Israelis are compared to the Nazis and the Palestinian refugee camps to Auschwitz; when circulating fabricated charges against Israel and the Jews, or blaming all Jews for Israel's policies etc.;
- **Double standards**: when criticism and accusation of Israel is applied selectively in news reports while other abusers of human rights are not mentioned;
- **Delegitimization**: denying Israel's right to exist, alone among all peoples of the world;
- **Denial of the Shoah**⁷: comparing Israel and its leaders to Nazis, Hitler or the Gestapo, and accusing Israelis of committing a genocide against the Palestinians to minimize or delegitimize the Shoah and its impact on the Jewish population of Europe.

Participants reflected on why comparing Israel to Nazi Germany constitutes antisemitic hate speech while comparing other countries to Nazi Germany might not. It was found that any message invoking comparisons to Nazi Germany should be reviewed critically, and one should ask:

- What is actually necessary for communicating a message?
- What is the story behind an image?

⁶ more info in CEJI's booklet 'Guidelines for Identifying & Monitoring antisemitism online & offline'; see: <http://archive.jpr.org.uk/download?id=2825>

⁷ 'Shoah' is the Hebrew term used to describe the Holocaust

- Why a particular image was chosen to communicate that message?
- What is the potentially hidden message behind a picture or text? Does it invoke any of the 4 D's (Demonization, Double standards, Delegitimization, Denial of the Shoah?)

It is always important to reflect on the intention of the author of a message and consider the short and long term influence of their messages. Such critical reflection is even more pressing when images and messages touch on sensitive issues or reactivate historical traumas of a community. Empathy is essential when analysing potentially hateful messages.

Defining hate speech

Two official definitions on hate speech of the Council of Europe were presented, interpreted together and discussed: the Committee of Ministers Recommendation CM R (97) 20 on Hate Speech and General Policy Recommendation No. 15 on combating Hate Speech of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI).

'For the purposes of the application of these principles, the 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.'

Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe recommendation CM R (97) 20 on Hate Speech

'Hate speech for the purpose of the Recommendation entails the use of one or more particular forms of expression – namely, 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.'

European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) General Policy Recommendation No. 15 on combating Hate Speech

However, even with clear definitions, challenges remain, e.g. how to tackle hate speech while respecting the right to freedom of speech and expression. Some of these challenges are mentioned and explained in the ECRI Recommendation, where it is explicitly stated that the freedom of expression and opinion is not an unqualified right and that it must not be exercised in a manner inconsistent with the rights of others. The Council of Europe's view – also set out in the European Convention of human rights – is that no human rights can be used to damage other rights and freedoms.

Having fortified their understanding of antisemitism and hate speech, the participants engaged in a group activity called 'Saying it worse'⁸ and analysed fictional online comments about Jewish people and Israel, ranking them according to how 'bad' they are. When faced with conflicting ideas within the group on how 'bad' these examples were, the participants concluded that such disagreements might have been partly attributable to differences in their local context. Other points of debate included questions whether all distinctions between 'them' and 'us' were harmful, whether positive labelling was acceptable, and whether harmfulness depended on the size of the audience reached.



These questions were deemed relevant as there are several aspects to look at when analysing hate speech and deciding on what kind of action to take. When the European Court of Human Rights reviews hate speech cases they too take many aspects into consideration.

Some of the aspects to take into account when assessing particular instances of hate speech⁹:

- Content;
- Tone;
- Intention;
- Target audience;
- Context;
- Impact.

In conclusion, the participants reflected on their learning experience. Some commented that they found it painful to face their own stereotypes and negative sentiments.

Taking action on antisemitic hate speech

The participants explored existing tools and practices used by European Institutions and civil society organisations to counter the spread of antisemitism, and discussed their effectiveness. Various guest speakers from the Council of Europe, the European Commission and academics talked about the role of their respective institution or body in combatting antisemitic hate speech. Existing projects and tools of partner NGOs were also explored.

Why the Council of Europe takes action on antisemitic hate speech

Matthew Johnson, Director of the Directorate for Democratic Citizenship and Participation of the Council of Europe welcomed the campaign partners, coordinators, activists and

⁸ Available in the manual '[Bookmarks](#)', p. 112

⁹ For a more detailed description of these aspects, see [Bookmarks](#), p. 151-153

representatives of Council of Europe's institutions, on behalf of the Council of Europe's Secretary General.

Mr Johnson outlined new developments in the human rights landscape regarding antisemitism and hate speech and underscored the Council of Europe's persistent commitment to address such issues. He drew attention to challenges young people in general and human rights activists in particular have to face in contemporary societies in Europe, in which conspiracy theories are flourishing with fake news spreading widely, and hate speech is becoming our everyday experience in both offline and online environments. Data gathered by ECRI, partner NGOs including CEJI and MDI, and the Hate Speech Watch indicate that antisemitic hate speech is becoming increasingly normalised in the populist criticism of established institutions, media companies and charities that work on non-discrimination and promotion of human rights. These trends are related to worsening economic conditions with austerity measures in many countries and to social changes such as the inflow of millions of migrants to Europe.

'The persistence of antisemitism, including through online expressions of hate speech is a major concern to the Council of Europe.'

Matthew Johnson, Director of the DDCP of the Council of Europe

Addressing these alarming tendencies and standing up against hate speech, and antisemitic hate speech in particular, are priorities for the Council of Europe. The All Different – All Equal and the No Hate Speech Movement campaigns have been conducive to promoting inclusive society and participation, and tackling all forms of discrimination including antisemitism and antisemitic hate speech.

The Council of Europe promotes human rights also through education. Mr Johnson emphasised the need to raise awareness about human rights issues, and empower young people to identify and report fake news and hate speech, and take action. He drew attention to tools developed by the Council of Europe, including the revised Compass manual and the new manual 'We CAN!', the latter providing specific tools on how young people can respond to online hate speech with counter and alternative narratives.

In conclusion, he underlined the importance of the Seminar in strengthening cross-sectoral cooperation to stand up for marginalized people, especially migrants and minorities, and countering antisemitic hate speech. Finally, he wished the participants a fruitful seminar.

Research on antisemitism and hate speech

Paul Iganski, Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice at the Lancaster University Law, discussed hate speech and antisemitism from an academic point of view, based on available research data, focusing on three main issues: severity of hate speech and related consequences in terms of counteractions, additional risks of the online environment in disseminating hate speech, and the global prevalence of antisemitism.

Mr Iganski underlined that although there is no universally accepted definition of hate speech, it inevitably has two key elements: it involves some extremely negative derogatory sentiments and comments; and constitutes threat to social peace. 'Article 19'¹⁰, a British human rights organisation, developed a model called the pyramid of hate speech, which represents various levels of hate speech according to the severity of harm it entails, with inciting violations of international law at the top and 'lawful hate speech' at the bottom. This categorisation has practical consequences: although anti-hate speech activists should address all forms of hate speech, the most severe forms must be criminalised too as they violate international and national law. Hate speech incidents falling under lower categories may be combated through counter and alternative narratives.

Categorising 'antisemitism' on the Internet

Inciting violence
Threatening violence
Endorsing violence
Intimidation
Inciting discrimination
Threatening discrimination
Endorsing discrimination
Invective/abuse
Alternative facts
Antipathy

The Internet plays an important role in spreading hate speech. Alternative facts can reach a much larger audience in the online environment than offline. Even if legally banned, 'classics' like *'Mein Kampf'* can be bought online today. In addition to verbal expressions of hate, a huge array of symbols is used, including among others the swastika, 88, Pepe the frog, or the use of (((echoes))), i.e. triple parentheses used to highlight the names of individuals of a Jewish background, in order to express antisemitic ideas.

Even more alarming is the fact that some haters do not stop at spreading hateful messages but use the world wide web to put the target on people's head by listing them and calling them 'public enemies. For instance, a far-right website listed 'Dutch Jews' and other 'enemies of the people', including, among others, Marxists, feminists and homosexuals.

An experiment carried out by Microsoft on Twitter with a chatbot – which was originally designed to test and improve Microsoft's understanding of conversational language of adolescents, and to learn from interacting with human users of Twitter – illustrated just how fast hate can spread. Microsoft created an artificially intelligent Twitter profile called 'Tay', but had to stop the experiment, because just in a few hours 'she' turned into a 'racist' spouting inflammatory tweets, maybe because the profile was hacked and abused, but more probably because that is what she 'learned' from other users.

Recent research may help assess the presence of antisemitism today. A survey about attitudes toward Jews, carried out through telephone and personal interviews with a representative sample of 53,100 people from 102 countries showed that 26% of respondents believed that many negative stereotypes about Jews were probably true. Another research, in which 11 million Tweets were analysed, found that almost 1% of all tweets invoked the Nazi era, with some of them containing explicit anti-Jewish invective, others attacking the Jews as proxies for Israelis. Concerning perpetrators, there are very few studies. But it seems that very few of the perpetrators are extremists, and the majority are ordinary people who use antisemitic hate speech and other forms of abusive language to vent their general

¹⁰ <https://www.article19.org/>

frustration and antisemitic narratives just come handy: such narratives are in the back of our minds and part of our collective consciousness.

In the plenary discussion four key issues were raised. It was noted that the criminalisation of antisemitic hate speech and the enforcement of related laws might vary from country to country. There is a large difference in what exactly is punishable and what the consequences can be. In the UK for example, racially aggravated offences are punished based on the words uttered, without examining the offender's motivation. Perpetrators are punished for the emotional, psychological and intimidatory harm caused by their manifest hostility. Hate speech by individuals and groups can be punished.

Concerning a potential cause-effect relationship between hate speech and violence in society, Mr Igansi explained that there clearly exists a correlation, but it would be hard to determine cause and effect. Each spike in hate speech online against particular communities of identity is followed by a corresponding spike in the physical world. Every time there is an upsurge in the Israel-Palestine conflict, there is an increase of verbal abuse, physical attacks, name calling against Jewish people, as Jews are often used as proxies for Israel.

Concerning the criminalisation of hate speech it was pointed out that an expression becomes hate crime when it is subject to the criminal law in nation states. Concerning the top category of hate speech, i.e. incitement of racial hatred, European states have fairly consistent legislation. However, regarding other forms of hate speech there is great deal of inconsistency. Many countries do not have provisions for hate speech that fall below the level of incitement of hatred. One aim of the NHSM campaign is to target, through using counter narratives, hate speech that fall below the criminal boundary.

Regarding potential obstacles to combating antisemitism, a major problem is the lack of a strategy and lack of knowledge about strategy. There are many people who are highly committed and want to take up the challenge, but it is very difficult to effectively fight antisemitism. Strategies and scientific evidence are needed, because such action might be dangerous, and can backfire. To select the most effective ways to tackle antisemitic hate speech, it is important to experiment with various counter and alternative narratives, possibly with the involvement of linguists, and check what works and what does not work.

Council of Europe initiative on antisemitism and hate speech

The No Hate Speech Movement

The 'No Hate Speech Movement' Youth campaign of the Council of Europe provides such a strategic approach to dealing with hate. Campaign coordinator **Menno Ettema** gave an overview of the campaign objectives, and its work on countering antisemitic hate speech.

The 'All equal – All different' campaign launched in 1994 was the Council of Europe's first comprehensive initiative to address racism, antisemitism, xenophobia and intolerance. Since then, a lot has changed. In 2011, the Council of Europe realised that the work done on antidiscrimination and xenophobia seemed not to transfer to the cyberspace. Shocked by the

'A sense of security in the space we all inhabit is a public good. Hate speech undermines this public good.'

Jeremy Waldron, university professor

hateful narratives spreading online in the aftermath of the attack in Utøya in 2011, the youth representatives in the Joint Council on Youth decided to launch a new campaign to enhance the security of the offline and online environment.

The No Hate Speech Movement campaign started in 2013 and was prolonged in 2015 until the end of 2017. The campaign slogan 'Combat hate speech by mobilising young people to speak up for human rights and democracy' reflects the Council of Europe's approach to this endeavour.

Objectives of the NHSM campaign include the following:

- To raise awareness about hate speech online and offline;
- To support human rights education activities to empower young people to recognise hate speech, and build competence to take action on it;
- To provide space for discussing challenges in accessing rights and addressing threats including online hate speech, and support youth workers in identifying ways to respond to them from a human rights perspective;
- To take action by reporting dangerous and/or illegal hate speech, on the one hand, while countering other expressions of hate through counter and alternative narratives, on the other;
- To strengthen youth participation in Internet governance processes;
- To organise and contribute to national campaigns, and work together with a wide range of partners.

The Council of Europe has realised that young people want to act and need appropriate means to do so. Bookmarks – a manual for combating hate speech online through Human Rights Education - was published to support education and awareness-raising activities. But it is also important to react and counter hate speech when we are confronted with it. For this purpose, the manual We Can! – Taking Action on Hate Speech through Counter and Alternative Narratives was published in March 2017. It provides young people with tools and approaches to debunk hate speech using counter or alternative narratives that promote human rights.

Besides these manuals, the campaign provides a range of additional tools, such as the campaign online platform, with the Blog and Hate Speech Watch, and Action Days. Through Hate Speech Watch people can report instances of hate speech and find out about national reporting mechanisms, including information on how to report hate speech to ombuds offices, national police, other national authorities or Internet safety bodies , in addition to social media platforms. Activists can also use their own social media space to speak up when they meet any hateful content, and can engage others in discussion to show that hate speech is not acceptable.

Through its tools, particularly Hate Speech Watch, the campaign has continuously responded to instances of antisemitic hate speech. On 9 November 2016 it organised the first European Wide Action Day on the topic mobilising all the national campaigns in 44 countries to speak up on this human rights issue.

Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

The General Rapporteur on combatting racism and intolerance of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe understands antisemitism to be a reality in Europe today and a threat to democracy. This calls for a political response, as explained by **Mr. Loddo**, representative of the secretariat of the General Rapporteur.

In January 2015, the Parliamentary Assembly created the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance, composed of parliamentarians who commit to taking open, firm and pro-active stands against racism, xenophobia and hatred. The Alliance is coordinated by the General Rapporteur on combating racism and intolerance, who is supported by the Bureau of the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

At the first meeting of the Alliance in January 2015, the topic of 'combating antisemitism in Europe' was extensively discussed. Mr Loddo recalled the words of two guest speakers at that meeting. One explained that words paved the way for deeds and such speech had led to the Holocaust in the past. He also said that it was important to call things by their name, not to hesitate to denounce antisemitism, not to be in denial of its existence and of its expansion. Another speaker at that meeting raised the alarm because of the spread of conspiracy theories, often targeting Jews.

In addition to antisemitic hate speech, the Alliance's priorities include homo- and transphobia and anti-Islamism. The Alliance has suggested measures against hate speech including criminal laws to cover expressions of antisemitism as well as Holocaust denial and to relativize it. Mr Loddo concluded by underlying the importance of education as the most effective means of countering antisemitism in the long term.

In the discussion with participants Mr Loddo further explained that the responsibilities of social media providers in dealing with hate speech should be noted. Experts, social media, NGOs and political bodies should all work together. The Parliamentary Assembly takes its share by following up on activities, regularly meeting government representatives and encouraging cooperation.

European Commission against Racism and Intolerance

Stefano Valenti, from the secretariat of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) of the Council of Europe explained the responsibilities and operation of ECRI. This human rights body monitors problems of racism, xenophobia, antisemitism, intolerance and discrimination, prepares reports, issues recommendations to member states, and monitors its implementation. ECRI has specific recommendations on the fight against antisemitism¹¹ and on combating hate speech¹². ECRI also publishes country reports

ECRI's general recommendations are available at

http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/library/publications.asp#P1773_19048

ECRI's country reports are available at

<http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/library/publications.asp>

¹¹ General Policy Recommendation No. 9

¹² General Policy Recommendation No. 15

covering these issues.

Regarding antisemitism, Mr Valenti drew attention to two main sources of hate speech identified on the basis of data collected by ECRI: well-known traditional sources including right-wing extremists, neo-Nazis, and Islamist-extremists, who recently became major disseminators of hate, in particular against Jews and Israel.

There are many ways to combat antisemitic hate speech: through national legislation, school education, policing, or monitoring antisemitism in the field of sports. Stefano Valenti mentioned some examples of ECRI's recent monitoring activities and resulting recommendations:

- Lithuania: ECRI monitored and reported on ultra-nationalistic marches, where protestors chant antisemitic slogans. ECRI drafted a recommendation and called on the national government to apply already existing legislation on hate speech and condemn all such behaviour (especially public displays of symbols associated with hate crimes) while respecting the right of protesters to the freedom of expression and to peaceful assembly.
- Slovakia: according to available information there are only 500 to 1000 active extremists in the country, but they have sophisticated strategies and use loopholes in the law. Perpetrators themselves often refer to human rights such as their right to assembly and right to freedom of expression. The police and other authorities find it difficult to differentiate between hate speech to be banned and forms of expressions protected by law. ECRI recommended that the police be trained on how to effectively tackle harmful incidents.
- Greece: Golden Dawn, an ultranationalist, far-right party has seats in the Parliament and receives public funding. ECRI recommends that there should be a law banning all public financing of groups that spread hate speech. All such financing should be stopped, and such organisations should be dissolved.
- In Belgium, there are neo-Nazi and extreme right groups which organise programmes e.g. concerts as private meetings, making it harder for the police and law enforcement to take measures even though such events have influence in the public arena. These organisations eventually have been condemned, and organisers prosecuted. It is very important to have an ombudsman's office or a specialised human rights institute that can help in assisting in taking such cases of violations of law to court.

Mr Valenti ended his presentation with emphasising the importance of prosecuting perpetrators of antisemitic hate speech. Such prosecution, however, should be supplemented with special educational programmes for perpetrators to convince them to abandon such harmful behaviours.

Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights

Sebastian Mangrau, Advisor of the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, talked about the human rights commissioner's point of view regarding hate speech and antisemitism in Europe today, underlining the importance of remembrance, human rights education and Holocaust education in combatting antisemitic hate speech.

The Commissioner is independent and non-judicial, carrying out country visits to monitor the situation in member states and drafting thematic reports to develop recommendations for states on human rights issues and to raise awareness. During his country visits, the Commissioner often meets Jewish leaders as well, who inform him about local problems regarding antisemitism. The situation is alarming. Greece stands out in this respect, with fascists among the members of Parliament. But Greece is not an isolated case unfortunately, there is reason for concern in many other countries including among others Georgia and Hungary.

Antisemitism manifests in many forms, including attacks against Jewish establishments, vandalism of Jewish cemeteries (as recently reported in France and Romania), or in hate speech. The rise of Holocaust denial and revisionism at official levels e.g. in Slovakia, and to relativize the evils of Nazism in the region of former Yugoslavia are highly disturbing.

Antisemitic hate speech is present in the physical world, in the streets, political discourse, and sports events, but also in the cyberspace, often as an integral component of a wider discourse: e.g. anti-liberal speech, or conspiracy theories. Hate speech may appear in coded languages as well. One example is Pepe the Frog (also mentioned in the morning in Mr Irganski's presentation), which started as a nice cartoon character but ended up as a symbol of hate.

A challenge faced by European democracies in this context is to distinguish speech which, although offensive, shocking or disturbing, is protected by the right to freedom of expression from speech which does not enjoy such protection. The case law of the European Court of Human Rights may serve as guidance. For example, the Court took a clear position in dealing with Holocaust denial in its decisions in *Garaudy v. France* and in the so-called 'Dieudonné affair'¹³. Mr Mangrau reminded that Holocaust denial includes minimisation, trivialisation and distortion of the Holocaust, which should all be criminalised under national laws.

Not all forms and instances of antisemitic hate speech could and should be prosecuted. In many cases political responses and strict law enforcement are not effective tools, and other approaches are needed. Education has a key role in combatting antisemitism at all levels. The respect for human rights should be promoted by Holocaust education and human rights education. Other approaches such as intercultural and interreligious cooperation, or taking action through reporting, awareness raising and advocacy may be just as effective. The Commissioner has fully supported the "No Hate Speech Movement" since its beginning as best practice. Another good practice is the 'Stand Up' campaign¹⁴ in the UK, supported by the government.

In conclusion, Mr Mangrau highlighted the 'added values' offered by the Commissioner and several ways it can contribute to the civil society's efforts to combat hate speech and antisemitism:

- The capacity to pinpoint issues and act as a mediator between communities and governments;
- Country reports, which are published in a short time after a country visit;
- Intervention through the media and delivering messages to national authorities.

¹³ For more information about the Court's decisions related to hate speech, see http://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/FS_Hate_speech_ENG.pdf

¹⁴ more about this: <http://www.belongto.org/campaign.aspx>

European Commission programme on combatting antisemitism

Katharina von Schnurbein, Coordinator on combating antisemitism at the European Commission, presented the activities of the coordinator and of the European Commission in relation to antisemitic hate speech.

Her post and that of the Coordinator on combating anti-Muslim hatred were created in 2015 by the European Commission. Their responsibilities are twofold: on the one hand, they serve as contact points for the communities concerned, and, on the other hand, contribute to the development of the European Commission's strategy to combat hate crime, hate speech, intolerance and discrimination and to other relevant policy areas such as education.

As Coordinator, Ms Schnurbein regularly meets representatives of the Jewish communities, often in the presence of officials of local and national authorities, and feed what she learned to various levels: to the political level, i.e. the First Vice-President of the European Commission Frans Timmermans, who is responsible for fundamental rights; and to the policy making process, working horizontally with various departments; and to the member states by making suggestions how they can make use of already available structures in a more targeted way in the fight against hate speech. The work with the member states is essential as change at the local level is possible only if the member states take ownership for preventing and fighting antisemitism.

Responsibilities of the Coordinator include monitoring compliance with relevant European legislation and promoting implementation by putting pressure on governments. In 2008, the Council of the European Union adopted its Framework Decision on Racism and Xenophobia, which covers all forms of hate crime and entails also the criminalisation of Holocaust-denial. After taking up their positions in 2016, the two Coordinators checked the actual implementation of this legislation and found that none of the member states have correctly transposed it. Regarding Holocaust denial, 15 member states have translated this EU level legislation into their national law so far.

Regarding cyberhate, enforcement of law may be promoted also by directly working with social media companies and helping them tackle hate speech on their platforms. In 2015, negotiations were launched with YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and Microsoft, eventually leading to a code of conduct, according to which they would revise or, if necessary, remove within 24 hours all illegal (according to European legislation) hateful content that have been flagged to them. The responsiveness of social media platforms to such reports have been quite limited so far, with only 1/3 of the reported cases revised within this timeframe. This ratio should be increased. Platforms seem more willing to respond to reports by trusted flaggers than to those by ordinary individuals. This phenomenon and the low response rate may be due to insufficient capacities and competences. When it comes to antisemitic hate speech, the lack of a legal definition of antisemitism adds to the difficulties of social media platforms. The official definition of antisemitism adopted in 2016 by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, although not legally binding, may serve as a good guidance. It not only contains a description of what antisemitism is, but a broad set of examples, too¹⁵.

Social media providers have understood that their way of dealing with hate speech influences their image. They realised that they need to build capacity regarding international

¹⁵ https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/sites/default/files/press_release_document_antisemitism.pdf

and national law and local languages in order to effectively deal with hate speech in social media. Some of them invest in training their staff, for example about alternative and counter narratives, and cooperate with civil society. An interim report is being prepared based on the findings of a working group consisting of about 30 NGOs across Europe. This report will be used at the next meeting with Internet companies at the end of May.

It is also imperative that cases of online hate speech be taken to courts and perpetrators be prosecuted. There have already been several such legal cases, also mentioned in news reports. Media appearance helps increase the visibility of this problem and raise awareness of possible legal consequences. Judicial and law enforcement officials, as well as social media companies, may lack capacities and resources needed for dealing with hate speech. Therefore, the training of police, judges, and prosecutors on antisemitism and hate speech plays a huge role in increasing their effectiveness. In order to provide support, an expert group was set up including representatives from ministries of justice and ministries of interior of member states to discuss these issues and to share best practices. Training programs have been organised, sometimes with the collaboration of NGOs. In many states, the lack of data collection is also a problem.

The European Commission considers education a key to preventing and curbing antisemitism, antisemitic hate speech and all other forms of hatred. Therefore, the Commission as a political body puts pressure on governments to develop and implement educational programmes and integrate these topics into the curriculum.

Education on antisemitism and the Holocaust should use a holistic approach, through learning from the past and also looking at the present: how the Jewish people and communities live today. Jews have always been an integral part of the European culture. This fact is often forgotten. To promote education, the Coordinator collects good educational materials and makes them available online.

Ms von Schnurbein concluded on a positive note by pointing out that new challenges may also bring opportunities. Although antisemitism, fuelled through religious sentiments and hatred of Israel, which may resonate with some Muslim migrants, many other migrants have no previous preconceptions about Judaism and are like blank sheets concerning antisemitism: whatever we write on them will have long term impact.

Civil society responses

A series of projects and tools on taking action on antisemitism and hate speech were presented by civil society organisations at the seminar in small working groups. In each session, a resource person gave a short presentation about their own project and then worked together with the participants to look into such approaches and tools and discuss how they can be further developed and promoted. The following tools and projects were presented:

1. 'Jewish Pathfinders': Norwegian-Jewish young adults combatting prejudice in high schools - how and why?, **Natalie Preminger** and **Yuval Regev**, Jewish Pathfinder, No Hate Speech Movement Committee Norway

2. 'Antisemitism then and now: fighting the old prejudices with new approaches', Hungary, **Marcell Lőrincz**, Board Member of ENAR
3. 'de:hate', Monitoring hate speech and hateful narratives online, working with platform providers and developing counter strategies in Germany, **Johannes Baldauf**, Amadeu Antonio Stiftung
4. Taking (legal) action on online antisemitic hate speech in Belgium, **Léona Erens**, Unia - Interfederal Centre for Equal Opportunities
5. 'Linguistic Self-Defence Guide Against Antisemitism' and 'Stopping Hate: How to Counter Hate Speech on Twitter', educating journalists and youth on language use when combatting hate speech, **Giulia Dessi**, Media Diversity Institute

The Jewish Pathfinders project, Norway

facilitated by Natalie Preminger and Yuval Regev

The aim of the Jewish Pathfinder project is to raise awareness about antisemitism in secondary school classes. The pilot project Jewish Pathfinders was launched in 2015. It is now supported by the Norwegian government under its Action Plan against Antisemitism, between October 2016 and 2020. The action plan contains 11 measures against antisemitism across Norwegian society, one of them being the continued support for the Jewish Pathfinders project. Since the fall of 2016, 140 classes have been visited all over Norway.

Norway has a very small Jewish community with some 2,000 Jewish people, yet antisemitism is present. The project was built on the idea that knowledge about Judaism and meeting Jewish people face-to-face can help in deconstructing stereotypes, and in preventing and combating prejudice and antisemitism. Therefore, two young Jews visit Norwegian high schools and meet students in interactive sessions using non-formal educational tools including dialogue, counter narrative, and raising questions. In their educational approach, they try to avoid political dimensions. Instead, the sessions focus on identity: participants are asked about their own identities and have to write and create their own personal "puzzle pieces" of identity.

The project aims not only to combat antisemitism, but also to address all forms of prejudice and bigotry. Therefore, the Jewish Pathfinders



consider themselves builders of bridges between different people for democratic citizenship. They hope to build those bridges by meeting people and talking about themselves and Judaism. Pathfinders believe that by looking at the Jewish community as a minority among many other similar minorities being 'different' in a way, students can see a general picture and understand why diversity in society is important, and better understand their need to be safe and confident in Norway.

Some of the challenges the activists carrying out the program often face is the difficulty of avoiding the political dimensions and dealing with political issues (e.g. the policy of Israel, or the conflicts in the Middle-East). This is also often blurred with what being Jewish means. Another challenge is how to avoid building or reinforcing stereotypes unintentionally .

The working group concluded that antisemitism is not dependent on the existence or size of Jewish communities in a particular geographical place. Antisemitism is built on stereotypes that lead to prejudice and can be found in regions with no Jewish population at all. Their recommendations for the future included:

- Expand the target audience to elementary schools and universities;
- Start a Scandinavian cooperation.
- Work more on fundraising.

‘Antisemitism then and now: fighting old prejudices with new approaches’, Hungary

facilitated by Marcell Lőrincz, Board Member of ENAR

The working group participants learned about the work of Subjective Values Foundation¹⁶ regarding antisemitism in Hungary. Subjective Values is an NGO active in the fields of arts, poverty, talent-scouting, anti-racism, diversity, cycling and sustainability. An important goal of the Foundation is to organize tolerance trainings for children and teachers in schools.

Marcell Lőrincz gave an introductory presentation about antisemitism in Hungary, which is present very much like as it was until the end of the World War II. The Hungarian authorities cooperated with and supported Nazi Germany. The role played by Hungarians during the war is a controversial issue, and is often not fully acknowledged by public officials or in history books. The Soviet oppression after the war did not allow proper discussion of what happened in the country during fascism. After the fall of the communist regime in 1989, antisemitism resurfaced immediately in the same form as it was before being suppressed after the World War II.

Recently, George Soros has become a key figure in antisemitic narratives in Hungary. Even though in such narratives there is no clear indication of him being Jewish, the supporters of the nationalist propaganda all know that he is a Jewish businessman. Politicians are abusing existing antisemitic rhetoric for their own benefit.

The Subjective Values Foundation use alternative narratives, such as the story of Hanna Szenes, poet and paratrooper, and Miklós Radnóti, one of the greatest poets of the 20th century to show positive Jewish figures.

Hanna Szenes, who is regarded as a national heroine in Israel, was born in Hungary and later emigrated to what today is Israel. She was trained together with some 30 young people



¹⁶ <http://www.szubjektiv.org/>

by the British army to parachute into Yugoslavia during World War II in order to help save Jews in Hungary, who were about to be deported to the German death camp at Auschwitz. She was caught, imprisoned and tortured, and eventually executed in 1944.

Miklós Radnóti was assigned to an unarmed labour battalion, where he was beaten and shot in 1944. 18 months after his death, the mass grave where he had been buried was exhumed and in the front pocket of Radnóti's overcoat his small notebook of his final poems was found.

The Foundation wants to reach a wide audience. Their trainers visit schools to make presentations and promote counter narratives. They have also monitored antisemitic hate speech in cooperation with MDI as part of the 'Get the Trolls Out' project. They often cooperate with Jewish communities e.g. in organising interreligious Hanukkah and Christmas celebrations.

The 'de:hate' project: Monitoring hate speech and hateful narratives online, working with platform providers and developing counter strategies, Germany

facilitated by Johannes Baldauf, from Amadeu Antonio Stiftung

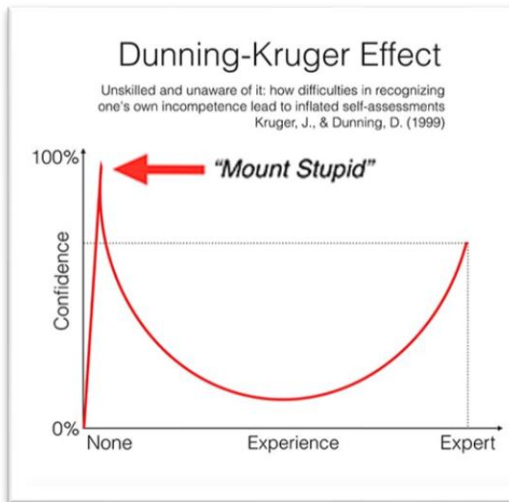
The Amadeu Antonio Foundation¹⁷ is one of Germany's NGOs working to strengthen democratic civic society and eliminate neo-Nazism, right-wing extremism, antisemitism, and other forms of bigotry and hate in Germany. It focuses on neo-Nazi and right-wing activities while at the same time takes concrete and proactive steps to eliminate the real and ongoing threat they pose to German democracy and pluralism.

Johannes Baldauf presented the 'de:hate' project run by the NGO, explained its objectives and methodology, including the use of ICT solutions.

Elements of their strategic approach to combating hate speech online include:

- Insights and expertise – by monitoring and analysing hate speech online including fake news, sharing knowledge with people about antisemitism, hate speech and other forms of hate;
- Hate speech management – by providing support through counselling to journalists, politicians, other NGOs, and others about what they can do when dealing with hate speech;
- Myth busting – by developing and sharing recommendations for actions including effective counter-strategies and counter-narratives to use in social media.

¹⁷ <http://www.amadeu-antonio-stiftung.de/eng/about-us/>



Johannes Baldauf explained about the Dunning-Kruger effect, which is a cognitive bias, wherein persons of low ability mistakenly assess their cognitive ability as greater than it is. People with very limited expertise tend to be more confident and more unable to recognize their own incompetence.

In social media, it is important to react very fast to hate speech. Information technology solutions can be used to counter hate speech. Such solutions include SEO (search engine optimization), social BOTs (software applications that run automated tasks, such as generating messages, e.g. tweets to advocate certain ideas)

and algorithms. The 'de:hate' project tries to make use of such tools.

For instance, a BOT was developed and used for sending automatic responses to hateful content on Twitter. The BOT relied on a list of key words thought to indicate that a post or comment included hate speech. The message sent by the BOT warned the poster/commenter that their post/comment may constitute hate speech and included a link where more information was available on the issue concerned.

Working group: the 'de:hate' project



After learning about the project, the participants split into smaller groups and worked with a wide-spread antisemitic message: 'Zionists are the Nazis of today'. They googled the term 'Zionist' first, then worked on possible responses to such a message posted online. They suggested that asking the posting persons to explain their words or statement may be an effective way to deal with such pieces of hate speech. For example, they could be asked to explain the meaning of Zionist and Nazi, or to provide some evidence to back up their claims.

Learnings the participants took home from this working group session:

- Good practices of combating hate speech and hateful narratives online, e.g. the Nichts-gegen-Juden¹⁸ campaign;

¹⁸ More on the campaign in German language: <http://www.nichts-gegen-juden.de/>

- Ways to identify hate speech and differentiate it from criticism or a question;
- Immediate reaction to hate speech online is essential, especially in Twitter (otherwise it won't be worth it because no one will be following the post after 3 days);
- It is important to reply in a kind and respectful manner with questions or arguments, possibly with a link to an article about the issue concerned;
- It is not a good idea to react with hate or irony as they can escalate the conflict and lead to more hate.

Taking (legal) action on online antisemitic hate speech, Belgium

facilitated by Léona Erens, from Interfederal Centre for Equal Opportunities (Unia)

The aim of the working group was to:

- Learn about the organization “Unia” and its work in Belgium;
- Learn about hate speech through statistics, the ways it is expressed, and the role of the Internet in spreading antisemitic hate speech;
- Learn about how hate speech is addressed in Belgium and ways of combating antisemitism;
- Discuss some concrete cases;
- Share experience and best practices.

The facilitator gave a presentation about the work Unia does in Belgium. Unia¹⁹ is an independent public institution that works in partnership with the federal government, the regions and the communities to combat discrimination and promote equal opportunities in employment, housing, education, welfare, leisure, culture, citizenship, etc.

Any individual in Belgium who feels that he or she has been discriminated against or has witnessed discrimination can report it to Unia. The organisation tries to reach an amicable solution by contacting the perpetrator(s) to provide information about potential consequences and ask them to delete the message. If such efforts fail to deliver the desired result, they would file a lawsuit with the prior consent of the person that suffered discrimination.

To raise awareness, Unia also provides training programmes on antidiscrimination law and tools for promoting equal opportunities and combating discrimination, and offers recommendations to organisations and government authorities. On their website, Unia publishes information on related law and advice on how to respond to hate speech.

Unia also collects data on discrimination in Belgium. According to their statistics, the number of reported incidents of online antisemitic hate speech has increased fivefold since 2005. The most prevalent form of antisemitism is online hate speech, followed by verbal aggression. Islamophobia is also becoming a serious issue in Belgium.

After the presentation, group members discussed various cases of antisemitic hate speech reported to Unia. One challenge they face is the difficulty of identifying the perpetrators. The group learned about the results of some legal cases Unia filed, and the lessons learnt. The punishment of perpetrators, if found guilty, is usually imprisonment and/or a penalty to be paid. Sometimes, the court decides to impose obligatory mediation.

¹⁹ <http://unia.be/en/about-unia>

Léona Erens shared a positive experience with an offender who was sentenced to participating in an educational programme. After the programme, the perpetrator wrote a letter, in which he apologised for what he had committed. This example shows the power of education in combating hate speech. Not all perpetrators are suitable for mediation though, and sometimes legal punishment is necessary. The participants nevertheless agreed that imprisonment is not a solution as it can lead to more aggression.

The group concluded that there was need for good educational programmes about the role of legal mediation in combating antisemitic hate speech. Cases undertaken and methods used by the Belgian Unia to combat hate speech can be used by actors in other countries as good examples / practices. They also concluded that education is a powerful tool in combating antisemitism online.

‘Linguistic Self-Defence Guide Against Antisemitism’ and ‘Stopping Hate: How to Counter Hate Speech on Twitter’, educating journalists and youth on language use when combatting hate speech
facilitated by Giulia Dessi, from Media Diversity Institute

The working group discussed two tools: [Tips to counter hate speech](#)²⁰ and [Linguistic Self-defence guide to counter antisemitism](#)²¹, and put together recommendations based on the experience of the participants. After a short presentation by the facilitator, the participants worked in an interactive manner discussing examples of hateful comments and tweets and trying to deconstruct the underlying narratives. They also reflected on some controversial issues (e.g. are positive stereotypes good or bad?) and discussed what makes an approach productive or counter-productive.

Working group facilitated by Giulia Dessi, MDI



In her introductory presentation, Giulia Dessi told the participants about the two tools designed as part of the ‘Get the Trolls Out’ project, which aimed to create counter narratives to antisemitism. The self-defence guide touches upon how antisemitic narratives work and gives tips on how to deal with them.

Based on examples analysed by the working group, the participants explored some of the most common hidden linguistic mechanisms used in antisemitic speech:

- ‘Them and us’ division: ‘them’ is used to indicate that ‘they’ are a completely different group with bad intentions as opposed to ‘us’ being good people. ‘Them’ also implies that ‘they’ are a homogeneous group;
- The victim-abuser reversal mechanism is often used to put the victim in the role of abuser;

²⁰ <http://stoppinghate.getthetrollsout.org/>

²¹ <http://www.getthetrollsout.org/education.html>

- Putting the issue into 'historical' context: 'it has always', 'they have always'. The term 'parasites' also has a historical aspect in this case: 'outsiders that do not belong to our society' (it is also used in communist contexts for people who do not work);
- So-called alternative facts are often used to support arguments: take only parts of the (true) facts and twist them to create arguments;
- Talking about the whole by referring only to a part of it, i.e. criticising George Soros, but make him appear to be a representative for all Jews. It is dangerous because it allows the perpetrator to voice antisemitic messages and, at the same time, deny antisemitism;
- Downplaying the importance of the Holocaust.

The participants discussed how to use the Guide in practice effectively. They pointed out the following key learning's:

- By identifying the weak points of a narrative, we can better address it.
- Being polite, respectful and taking the right approach are essential when reacting to hate speech. Attacking the attacker is not a good idea.
- The Guide can also be used in education: to teach people how to analyse messages they see online, including any underlying narratives.
- When looking at hate speech from a psycholinguistics point of view, we may realize that perpetrators are emotionally involved, and by looking for and understanding those feelings we can address the roots of hate speech.
- Facts-based counter narratives tend to be more efficient than simply pointing out that a particular message or its sender is racist.
- Regarding positive stereotypes the group agreed that they too can cause harm as they convey the message that the community concerned is a homogenous group.
- Reporting is important. However, it is a real problem that platform providers often do not respond to such reports.
- Responding is very often counter-productive or even dangerous. Working together with others as a group, building and implementing strategies can increase efficiency. It may be useful to ask civil society organisations for support.

The participants shared some good practices:

- A video about a person who changed her mind as a result of constant polite counter narratives: [I grew up in the Westboro Baptist Church. Here is why I have left](https://www.ted.com/talks/megan_phelps_roper_i_grew_up_in_the_westboro_baptist_church_here_s_why_i_left#t-936907)²²
- In Norway, when tweets are actually labelled as hate speech or inciting violence, a police officer goes to speak to the perpetrator.
- In Ukraine, the security service has been working with police and Internet platform providers for 3 years, tracking the perpetrators of hate speech, and talk to or arrest people when necessary.
- In Belgium, a public [TV show](http://www.vier.be/karenendecoster/videos/yes-eeen-vluchteling-minder/1347182)²³ tracked down the posters of hateful posts and asked those people to repeat their comments in front of the camera; many were actually reluctant to do so, or refused it.

²² https://www.ted.com/talks/megan_phelps_roper_i_grew_up_in_the_westboro_baptist_church_here_s_why_i_left#t-936907

²³ <http://www.vier.be/karenendecoster/videos/yes-eeen-vluchteling-minder/1347182>

In conclusion, the participants pointed out the importance of (human rights) education, joint action of civil society/activists and applying a multi-sector approach (i.e. cooperation of police and Internet platforms / IT companies). They also drafted recommendations:

- Use the Guide as a resource and reference to respond to antisemitic discourse;
- Use the Guide (and Tips) in educational programmes for school children;
- Do not act alone, but take organised action in a group to counter hate speech;
- Avoid being patronising and overly confrontational, as it may be counter-productive;
- Cooperate with police and Internet platforms to take action;
- Develop different approaches, e.g. build capacity of police;
- When responding, include a link to a fact-checking website so that hateful statements could be checked for accuracy.

The results of the working group discussions were presented in plenary. Then the participants discussed which of the ideas, tools, approaches, etc. they have learned about could and should be further developed into strategies, or actions, or activities to counter antisemitic hate speech, and noted down recommendations for the institutions, practitioners, civil society, campaign committees, national authorities for future action.

Combat hate speech through the use of counter and alternative narratives

Using counter and alternative narratives is an important approach to addressing hate speech. To find an adequate response to hateful messages, one must recognise and understand the working of oppressive narratives and learn how to deconstruct them and build and spread emancipatory narratives instead. The Council of Europe's new educational manual 'We Can!'²⁴ offers guidance to develop counter and alternative narratives to combat hate speech and promote human rights, especially in online environments.

Generalisation and social categorisation are universal aspects of human cognition, often leading to stereotypes and prejudice. Narratives lie at the foundation of our cognitive processes and provide an explanatory framework of events and other experiences. Narratives we encounter influence the way we think and behave, even if they are false, lopsided or destructive.

Intragroup contacts and cooperation toward shared goals can reduce social prejudice. Another way to constructively address prejudice is the promotion of narratives that are based on human rights values and facts instead of beliefs. Oppressive narratives are exclusive (the in-group: 'us' defines the out-groups: 'them') and aggressive, while emancipatory narratives are inclusive and not aggressive. Counter narratives confront another narrative by undermining the authority of the source or by turning the logic of the reasoning against them. Alternative narratives, on the other hand, aim to undercut hate speech narratives by changing the frame of the discussion and focusing on what we are "for". When developing counter or alternative narratives one must make sure that they are constructive and in line with human rights.

Key elements of all narratives include: structure, characters, context, relationships and meaning.²⁵ The participants worked in groups to analyse a concrete piece of antisemitic hate

²⁴ Available here: <http://www.coe.int/en/web/no-hate-campaign/we-can-alternatives>

²⁵ For details, see the ppt presentation about narratives in the Annex, and/or page 62-64 in 'We Can!'

speech, looking at its structure and the underlying motivators, and to create adequate responses, meaning they are constructive, effective and respect human rights.

It was found by the participants that the thorough analysis of examples of hate speech was inspiring but also very challenging, as it was difficult to figure out what the actual message and the underlying narrative of a piece of hate speech might have been. It was also hard to formulate a response based on a careful deconstruction of the relevant hate speech, and use the right wording to convey a powerful message in a respectful manner with a politically correct content, and to avoid using a patronising tone. It was pointed out that applying an analytic approach was very useful as it allowed keeping distance, slowing down, and thinking rationally instead of attacking back with an emotionally charged response.

The participants developed some recommendations regarding the development and use of counter and alternative narratives:

- One should be very careful with the wording, because each word may have an impact;
- Hateful messages should be analysed from many aspects, and one should choose the best way to respond;
- Asking the person spreading hateful content to explain what his message entails may be an adequate response to hate speech;
- Think before you act!
- Other vulnerable groups, e.g. Roma should be involved, because they may have different perspectives and realities.

Recommendations for further action on antisemitic hate speech

Based on the previously discussed approaches, tools and practices of European organisations and civil society organisations, the seminar participants developed recommendations for further actions that can be taken on antisemitic hate speech, and drafted plans for the Action Day against Antisemitic Hate Speech on November 9. Promising approaches and methodologies to be applied were also identified.

The participants' recommendations for taking actions can be divided into four major areas:

- Raise awareness;
- Strengthen education on antisemitism, hate speech, Holocaust denial and human rights;
- Improve implementation of law and policy recommendations;
- Strengthen cooperation and build coalitions.

Taking action on antisemitic hate speech is a collective responsibility, where each member plays its part, including society in general and governments and institutions in particular, civil society organisations, and individual members of society.

The identified recommendations are presented below, broken down by the three levels.

What society in general and governments in particular can do

It was recommended by the working groups that governments as well as national and international institutions should put antisemitism on their agenda and take measures to raise awareness about it and its impact on society by monitoring antisemitic incidents and hate speech and publishing related research data. Society in general and politicians and public representatives in particular should be reminded that using hate speech is contrary to human rights values and therefore unacceptable. Instead they should promote social cohesion and solidarity. It was recommended that memory walks could be organised to promote solidarity and awareness about antisemitism.

Governments and institutions should ensure access (in both formal/non-formal settings) to education that promotes human rights values; contributes to the prevention of antisemitism and hate speech; and empowers learners to take action on such issues. In this respect, the participants recommended the following:

- Human rights education should be integrated into primary school curricula, allowing pupils to learn about discrimination, antisemitism, Islamophobia, and related historical aspects.
- Religious classes at schools should focus on shared values of different religions and the contribution of different cultures to human development.
- Good quality media literacy and human rights education must be provided as of primary school to ensure children and youth can identify reliable sources of information and recognise hate speech, fake news and conspiracy theories.
- 'No Hate' education should be provided at schools, universities as well as workplaces to educate - potentially with the active involvement of Holocaust survivors - on (antisemitic) hate speech and ways to combat it online and offline, including reporting, dialogue, and promoting alternative and counter narratives.
- In teachers' training, methodology for media literacy education and human rights education should be included in the curriculum.
- Training programmes focusing on legal mechanisms regarding antisemitic hate crime and on mediation methodology should be organised for various target groups.
- Conditions for a safe learning environment must be provided in all educational programmes.

As regards action through legal measures, it was recommended that governments should ensure compliance with and enforcement of existing law on hate speech, and adopt further legal regulations as necessary. They should implement related recommendations of the Council of Europe and operate adequate systems for monitoring compliance with national as well as international policies and recommendations. The participants reminded that the law should be applied equally to all, including among others to members of parliament. States should penalise hate crimes, but sanctions should include compulsory educational programmes for hate speech perpetrators rather than fines or imprisonment.

Cooperation at all levels, including national, regional and international level is required. Governments should work together with civil society and support their initiatives to combat hate speech, and involve NGOs in the implementation of relevant policy recommendations of the Council of Europe and EU bodies.

What civil society organisations can do

A large number and a wide range of recommendations have been drafted for civil society organisations to tackle antisemitism and antisemitic hate speech.

In respect to awareness raising, most suggested actions would target the general public, and only one recommendation addressed a particular segment of society, namely public officials and politicians. Civil society organisations should raise awareness by:

- Promoting positive narratives in social media e.g. by posting Hanukkah greetings;
- Organising memory walks connected to current social issues or events;
- Organising concentration camp visits;
- Disseminating information about the NHSM campaign, and related actions on antisemitism;
- Issuing position papers condemning recent antisemitic tendencies or incidents;
- Shaming perpetrators by holding them publicly accountable in media, tearing down their anonymity;
- Organising public events on religious holidays of different communities (Christians, Jewish, etc.);
- Organising street events near Holocaust monuments and asking passers-by what they know about the monument and its significance;
- Interviewing and video recording Holocaust survivors and disseminating their testimonies in social media;
- Installing stumble stones in cities;
- Monitoring and collecting data on antisemitic hate speech and publishing the results;
- By calling on public officials and politicians to avoid using hate speech and reminding them that antisemitic hate speech violates human rights norms and therefore is unacceptable.

Regarding education, the participants recommended that civil society organisations should implement more human rights educational programmes in general, both in formal and non-formal settings, to all ages from very young children through school and university students to adults at work places. Training of trainers to create a multiplier effect, and the empowerment of Jewish youth from local communities through education have been recommended as well.

Specifically, programmes focusing on antisemitism should be organised for young people to educate about the Holocaust and antisemitic hate speech, including ways to combat it through reporting or engaging in dialogues both in the online and offline space. Learning about the historical context and antisemitic myths was mentioned as an essential element for developing competences to deconstruct and respond to antisemitic hate speech.

Some content elements specifically recommended for competence development included training on relevant legal mechanisms, mediation skills, and media literacy. Concerning the methods of education on antisemitism, the followings were recommended:

- Living library,
- Peer education,
- Holocaust testimonies on video,
- Using personal and emotional approaches through exploring identities, similarly to the Jewish Pathfinders project,

- Using an intersectoral approach, e.g. training programmes combining education on antisemitism and antigypsyism.

In the field of law and policy, it was proposed that civil society organisations should support development of policy recommendations by the national governments to address antisemitism and antisemitic hate speech.

With regard to cooperation, the participants underlined the importance of cooperating at national, regional and international level, and drafted recommendations regarding potential civil society partners to work together with on particular issues. It was suggested that cooperation with a targeted content was preferable.

Suggested cooperation and/or coalitions partners and areas of cooperation included the following:

- Platform providers: to combat antisemitism online;
- ICT experts: to develop effective methods to counter hate speech;
- Other NGOs: to share expertise and best practices, involve them in the No Hate Speech Movement campaign, and/or develop concrete counter narrative strategies together;
- Governmental organisations: to implement various programmes;
- Representatives of various communities (e.g. Jewish) to engage them in joint projects.

The working groups developed recommendations on various offline and online actions to combat antisemitic hate speech. Recommended actions civil society organisations could implement in the physical world include:

- Organise meetings with local young educated Jews to learn about Jewish life and culture;
- Set up a 'No Hate Hotline' where specialists would be available for hate speech emergencies, e.g. for people who have become victims of hate speech and want to get advice on how to respond;
- Organise social events (e.g. sports tournaments) and youth camps inviting different minorities or other people with different backgrounds to promote social inclusion.

Recommended actions the civil society organisations could implement in the cyberspace:

- Increase online presence and use search engine optimization (SEO) to 'advertise' human rights values and disseminate counter and alternative narratives;
- Become a trusted flagger;
- Create online game to learn about antisemitism and mobilise young people to take action on antisemitic hate speech;
- Create and circulate videos that show people expressing their opinions about online hateful comments;
- Learn more about intelligent BOTs, and use them as appropriate.

As regards the strategy and tactics recommended for civil society organisations to deal with antisemitic hate speech, the following elements were underlined:

- Address the problem of 'preaching to the choir' (when efforts are made to convince people who are already convinced) and reach out to a wider audience through dialogue;
- Ensure subsequent evaluation of actions taken;

- Explore funding opportunities and use funds for projects;
- Use new media and social media more creatively;
- Develop strategies for how to make counter narratives effective;
- Invest in factfinders and BOTs to allow targeted and fact-based actions;
- Develop narratives to deconstruct historical myths;
- Assess the effectiveness of various counter narratives; promote only positive narratives and avoid using those that contribute to spreading hatred;
- Fight trolls with their own weapons;
- Promote solidarity between minorities.

What individual members of society can do

Recommendations at the individual level invoke the responsibility and capacity of each person and also reflect the participants' own commitment to taking action. Regardless of the type of action, the importance of safety and self-protection was pointed out.

As regards awareness raising, the importance of using an individual's social network to spread messages, clarify ideas, and share materials and other information both online and offline was highlighted.

The role of self-education in capacity building, especially concerning the knowledge and skills to recognise fake or twisted facts and false statements and the ability to respond to them effectively was also underlined.

As to cooperation, it was suggested that the seminar participants should share professional experience and knowledge with each other in the future as well, for instance through their newly created Facebook group, and should initiate collaboration between the organisations represented by the participants at the Seminar to implement training sessions in partnership. Contacting Jewish communities, and making friends with Jewish people were proposed as means to strengthen social cohesion and to weaken the distinction between 'us' and 'them'.

In terms of actions any individual can take to combat antisemitism and antisemitic hate speech online and/or offline, the following recommendations had been developed:

- Challenge alternative facts, recognize and respond to false statements by providing data from reliable sources;
- Report antisemitic behaviour and antisemitic hate speech;
- Use the opportunity of action days to promote human rights and counter hate speech;
- Initiate local events in cooperation with local organisations.

Working groups recommended that individuals could take actions specifically in the online environment through the following channels:

- Use Hate Speech Watch²⁶;
- Create a common platform for members of the NHSM so that they can exchange ideas about how to fight online antisemitic hate speech;
- Use one's own social media account to raise awareness, share resources of NGOs, and create counter and alternative narratives.

²⁶ Find hate Speech Watch at: www.nohatespeechmovement.org/hsw

Proposals for the Action Day on Antisemitic hate speech

Introduction to Action Days

The No Hate Speech Movement regularly organises European wide Action Days²⁷ to raise awareness of particular forms or targets of hate speech. Twenty-seven Action Days have been organised since 2013. The action days mobilise the national campaigns and European partners of the No Hate Speech Movement in joint activities on specific forms of hate speech. Each action day has a programme of activities prepared in co-operation with the national campaign co-ordinators, campaign partners, online activists, and the Council of Europe.

When planning an action day, the work usually starts with gathering content on the topic of the action day and continues with designing actions in cooperation. Efforts are made to share content and engage people online, by posting on the NHSM webpage and in various social media.

The objectives and content of previous action days against antisemitism and the various actions implemented in 2014 and 2016 were presented by László Földi, online community manager. The action day against antisemitic hate speech in 2017 will be the third and last one organised under the NHSM campaign.

An Action Day typically includes:

- A solidarity action, e.g. changing Facebook profile pictures or cover photos, or sharing an image with a slogan or message at a particular point of time;
- Presentation of facts and figures, preferably in the form of infographics, because they work well online, are easy to share and more likely to go viral;
- Offline actions, implemented by youth organisations, teachers, etc., using easily available materials, e.g. activities from Compass or Bookmarks;
- Blog posts, testimonials of people affected, opinion pieces, academic articles, and other writings;
- Production and dissemination of videos and memes.

The counter content created is shared online and remains available after the action day. Infographics and other posts resurface repeatedly as they are shared multiple times. Stakeholders should build on the learning's of the first two actions days and make use of tools and resources previously created and still available. Such tools and resources include for example the No Hate Chain or the Hate Speech Watch, all available in the www.nohatespeechmovement.org website²⁸.

Recommended actions for the Action Day of 9 November 2017

Building on the results of the previous sessions the seminar participants developed ideas, recommended actions and made plans for the Action Day countering antisemitic hate speech on November 9, 2017 in six working groups, each focusing on one the following types of

²⁷ More info on action days in 2017: <http://blog.nohatespeechmovement.org/action-days-2017/>

²⁸ See László Földi's ppt presentation in the Annex

actions:

- Expressions of solidarity;
- Offline actions;
- Facts and figures in infographics;
- Educational activities;
- Writings/articles; and
- Images, memes, videos.

1. EXPRESSION OF SOLIDARITY

Specific online actions including the posting of slogans, tweets and pictures were suggested as ways to express solidarity with Jewish communities. For example, it was recommended that online activists should change their Facebook profile photos for an image triggering solidarity. Additionally, the idea of an online game was proposed. The game would allow players to unfold their identity through seven questions. After answering them, a result page would appear with the message “Congratulations, you are a human being” and with the logo of the Action Day. The players could share the game through their social media network.

Regarding slogans, the use of hashtags to go with the slogans and pop-up icons (e.g. a heart) to increase visibility and appeal was recommended. The following slogans were developed:

- ‘We are them and they are us’
- ‘Mazel tov Europe’
- ‘Switch off antisemitism’
- ‘Diversity is what has made Europe’
- ‘We are all human beings’
- ‘Difference makes us richer’
- ‘Jewish people have contributed a lot to Europe’
- ‘Respect each other’s choices’

Recommended tweets:

- ‘I am sure you are aware that Rockefeller was not Jewish.’
- ‘Most conspiracy theory promoters have never been project managers. They are over-optimistic.’

2. FACTS AND FIGURES IN INFOGRAPHICS

Infographics can convey complex content in a way that attracts the attention of the targeted audiences and makes the content easy to understand. It was suggested that country-specific infographics that use simple and catchy visuals should be created. Complicated and long messages may be broken up into smaller bits, e.g. based on stereotypes, types of data, etc. Prioritisation is a must. Cooperation with other NGOs and feedback from competent parties about the selected messages and infographics may help avoid potential pitfalls and enhance effectiveness.

The following ideas were suggested for infographics:

- Fact sheets to be translated into national languages and /or made country-specific, and posted on the NHSM website and Facebook in order to:
 - Deconstruct myths:
 - Top 10 non-Jewish people leading important banks, to debunk the myth that 'Jewish control the world',
 - Information that show that Jews are not a homogeneous group,
 - Information on how Jews belong to Europe, e.g. they have lived here for x years,
 - Series of questions 'Did you know that ...' (e.g. they were not allowed to pursue certain professions?) with answers.
 - Elicit sympathy and combat Holocaust denial: historic facts presented through visuals;
 - Raise awareness: number of hate crimes / hate speech incidents against Jewish people in particular years.
- Information on how Jews have contributed to society in general or to other religious communities.
- Jewish traditions, e.g. what is a kippah and what does it represent, why do Jewish men wear it?
- Parallels and similarities between the Jewish, Muslim, or Christian religions (e.g. symbols, traditions, holidays).
- Mindmap in the form of a flowchart: a series of questions ('Do you think...?') about the Jewish people, with circular arguments, eventually proving that the initial question itself was wrong.

3. OFFLINE ACTIONS

Various offline actions were proposed, all of them to be organised as street events including flashmobs, festivals, and other activities to promote human rights and/or support Jewish communities by sharing information about the Jewish culture or bringing together Jews and non-Jews to learn about each other.

Regarding flashmobs, it was suggested that video recordings of the events should be made and distributed online. The following flashmob events could be organised:

- Traditional Jewish dance, with orthodox Jews (as their clothing and appearance are very visual) and (other) local citizens dancing together;
- Jewish and non-Jewish people from different ethnic and/or religious groups, dressed in clothes indicating their group identity holding posters/banners with messages which promote human rights or support Jewish people, e.g. 'Equality for all religions', 'All people have the right to live where they want', 'Jewish culture is not less important than any others';

Street festivals with the participation of various local communities were also recommended, where Jewish and non-Jewish could meet. Proposed programme elements included: Jewish (kosher) food, Living Library, music, concert, sports competition, 'wear a kippah for a day', wear 'amulets' or bracelets with Jewish symbols, 'hug-a-Jew'. It was suggested that local or

national symbols (e.g. national flags) as well as Jewish symbols should be used at such events to promote the idea of 'we together' instead of 'we and them'. Also, festivals and other entertaining programmes should be held on a day preceding or following the official date of the Action Day, rather than on November 9, anniversary of the Kristallnacht (a pogrom against Jews in 1938).

Another offline action recommended by the participants was the shooting of a video in which an interviewer asks people on the street: "What do you know about Jewish people?". A short clip of positive statements should be made based on the answers.

Last, but not least, a 'pen-pals' action was recommended, where letters previously written by members of the local Jewish community (Holocaust survivors, children, etc.) with messages or stories they want to share would be printed in many copies and distributed in the street at various occasions. A 'post office' could also be set up with 'postmen' who would hand letters to passers-by.

4. EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Most education activities recommended by the participants would aim to raise awareness of particular issues related to antisemitism, such as:

- Potential consequences of hate speech. (Recommended activity: 'Roots and branches' in Bookmarks.)
- Complexity of personal identities: i.e. all people have diverse identities, and any generalisation based on only one or few aspects or the denial of any aspects of identity is irrational and harmful (Recommended activity: 'MY IDENTITY puzzle', where participants draw a picture of their diverse identity potentially related to their country or town, ethnicity, religion, hobbies, political groups, etc.)
- The fact that humans tend to categorise and create stereotypes about people, often attaching either positive or negative values to such categories.
- Stereotypes about different cultures. (Recommended activity: like the one performed on the first day of the Seminar, involving self-exploration and discussion, based on questions such as 'What is my exposure/ images I get about a particular people/religion/culture from childhood to adulthood?' 'When did I decide if they were true/untrue?')

As suggested by the working group participants, some educational activities could be carried out in classrooms settings, potentially with the involvement of parents as well as teachers and students, allowing the parents to see for themselves what non-formal education means. Other activities could be implemented in non-formal settings, for example connected to initiation rituals, when young people are formally admitted to adulthood (e.g. in Norway there are both religious and secular ceremonies).

5. WRITINGS / ARTICLES

There were several topics and promising briefs suggested for articles to combat antisemitism and hate speech. Also, some useful resources to be used for articles to debunk conspiracy

theories were shared²⁹. Any further ideas on how to debunk myths effectively and suggestions for potential authors would be welcome!

The following topics were recommended:

- Explain the difference between antisemitic comments and criticism of the Israeli government;
- Challenge conspiracy theories, and suggest ways to debunk myths;
- Look at examples of how an encounter with others would change one's perspective of some 'others';
- Explore the effect of antisemitism and antisemitic hate speech on Jewish people, through testimonies – interview style;
- Explore the risks of generalizations and stereotypes, both negative and positive.

The working group developed three briefs for recommended articles:

REAL-LIFE TESTIMONY OF HOW ANTISEMITISM AFFECTS THE LIFE OF JEWS TODAY

In the article, one or more Jewish persons would explain the real impact of antisemitism in their life and how this shapes their identity.

How does it feel to go through security when you go to pray? To receive a death threat message on Twitter? To read in a Facebook post that Hitler was right? Do you feel constantly under threat? Are you afraid of wearing something that identifies you as Jewish? Have you ever considered leaving your country? How do you make sense of the impact of antisemitism and overcome it? How comfortable are you in expressing yourself as a Jewish person online?

Proposed author: Giulia Dessi (also as ghost-writer in case the actual source would be uncomfortable with writing, or if it is in the form of an interview, or in case the article gives the story of more than one person.)

SHARE THE STORY OF YOUR PERCEPTION OF JEWISH PEOPLE

The article would be an inspiring story about the transformation of someone's perception of Jewish people. It would present how a person has changed their perception of and opinion about Jewish people over the years as a result of various experiences in life. It should be a personal story, describing the life experiences from childhood through teenage years into adulthood, explaining how they have coped with the information/stereotypes that they had received as a child, how such messages have influenced their opinion (maybe supported by some interesting stories/events) till nowadays.

The article would also explore how children often take information as it is served, without thinking it through, but also how this can change due to new information or education, critical thinking, encounters with Jewish people, and other experiences in life.

DEALING WITH STEREOTYPES AND CONSPIRACY THEORIES

The article would analyse current conspiracy theories and stereotypes and their negative impact on Jewish people, on the one hand, and on the perception of Jewish people by other people, on the other hand, the latter eventually leading to antisemitism.

²⁹ <http://www.tabletmag.com/jewish-life-and-religion/202716/anti-semitic-conspiracy-theories>
<http://www.enar-eu.org/Debunking-myths-about-Jews>

It would also provide strategies and methods on how to debunk the stereotypes and myths about Jewish people, and how to deal with conspiracy theories.

6. IMAGES, MEMES, VIDEOS

Several pieces of advice have been collected as to how to develop and use images, memes and videos in the most efficient way. It was recommended that activists should:

- Analyse the effectiveness of previous practices involving the use of images, memes and videos and learn from past experiences;
- Analyse how other people deal or not deal with antisemitism.
- Use youth culture from a youth culture perspective
- Use proactive messages instead of only reactive ones, and demonstrate 'what we stand for';
- Be aware that hate speech promoters are often paid for developing and spreading powerful hateful messages, so have an unfair advantage vis-à-vis the human rights activists;
- Note that the problem of finding the right tools or channels may be due to the available 'language' being more suitable for spreading hate than for promoting 'nohate';

The working group also developed ideas for images, memes, and videos that could be used for the Action Day:

- Create and promote 'UNHATE photo's, e.g. two men who represent opposing sides quasi kissing;
- Make fun of the mechanism of scapegoating;
- Choose two conspiracy theories, and make fun of them;
- Create funny videos with short statements by activists combating antisemitism and/or Holocaust survivors;
- Select one simple message (one sentence, to be decided through online discussion after the Seminar), make a video conveying this message and share it by a large number of activists in social media on the Action Day;
- Use "Old Jews telling jokes" videos;
- Use funny way to deconstruct myths similar to Rachel Bloom's satiric "Elders of Zion Meeting" songs.

Conclusions

The rise of antisemitism and the spread of antisemitic hate speech both offline and online are major concerns today for the Council of Europe and all stakeholders committed to building democracy and a world where human rights are protected and promoted. The seminar explored effective ways to tackle this challenge and empower young participants to combat antisemitic hate speech in their respective local environments and in the online space, and prepare them for taking action against antisemitic hate speech in the future, especially on the Action Day countering antisemitic hate speech on 9 November 2017.

The seminar provided room for the participants to learn about and discuss in detail what antisemitism and hate speech are and how to address them effectively. The historic roots of antisemitism and manifestations of antisemitic hate speech in today's media and public discourse were examined and the approaches applied by various bodies of the Council of Europe and the European Commission, and tools used by partner organisations were explored. Through interactive sessions, the participants improved their skills as to how to recognise antisemitic hate speech and distinguish it from the criticism of Israeli policies, and how to identify stereotypes and understand the nature and drivers of hate speech. They also shared some best practices and discussed how such practices could be used in or adapted to other contexts. Furthermore, they explored narratives underlying hatred and the working of such narratives, and practiced writing counter and alternative narratives to combat hate speech. Finally, they outlined their plans for the Action Day on 9 November. The activists and other actors reinforced and reconfirmed their commitment to the cause of protecting human rights and to making further efforts to fight antisemitism and antisemitic hate speech, especially online.

Results of the seminar:

- Empowerment of the participants in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes;
- Visibility of existing tools to raise awareness or take action on antisemitic hate speech;
- Ideas, plans of actions to be implemented by the participants and their organisations on or around the Action Day on 9 November to address antisemitic hate speech;
- A set of conclusions and recommendations for stakeholders.

When evaluating their seminar and their own learning process, the participants expressed that they had significantly increased their knowledge about antisemitism and hate speech and improved their understanding of challenges and their skills in meeting those challenges. As reported, they expected to receive more detailed and concrete information about the work of institutional actors and have more time to explore the issues more thoroughly. They, however, had learned a lot from each other and appreciated the opportunity to share experiences and be together with their peers from many different backgrounds.

According to their feedback, the participants had become more competent in recognising antisemitic stereotypes in media narratives, but also more aware of their limited expertise. Many found that they would need to further develop their competences and would appreciate further support from the Council of Europe and from their peers. They expressed their commitment to take part in future actions.

Annexes

List of participants and speakers

Participants

Country of residence:	Surname:	First Name:	Name of sending organisation or institution
Albania	Salla	Matilda	Projekte Vullnetare Nderkombetare –PVN (International Voluntary Projects)
Armenia	Khachatryan	Anahit	Youth Alliance Via Networking
Armenia	Kostanyan	Arpine	Educational and Cultural Bridges NGO
Azerbaijan	Gasimzade	Ilhama	National Assembly of Youth Organizations of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Belgium	Bischoff	Marius	AJC Transatlantic Institute
Belgium	El Khattabi	Hayat	De Ambrassade
Belgium	ERENS	Léona	Unia - Interfederal Centre for Equal Opportunities
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Ahatovic	Hatidza	ESN Sarajevo
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mujanović	Alma	Democratic Youth Move
Estonia	POIM	MAARI	Estonian National Youth Agency SA Archimedese noorteagentuur
Germany	Baldauf	Johannes	Amadeu Antonio Stigtung
Germany	Scheuren	Jerome	JerriesBlog (online activist/vlogger on youtube)
Germany and Macedonia	Trajkovska	Marina	Loesje Berlin
Italy	Tahar	Bilel	Eurodemos Youth Mobility NGO
Latvia	Rodionov	Andrei	Inspiration by Motion. Latvia
Norway	Preminger	Natalie Karen	Det Mosaiske Trossamfund (The Oslo Jewish Community)
Norway	Regev	Yuval	Det Mosaiske Trossamfund (the Jewish community of Oslo)
Romania	Drexler	Irina	No Hate Speech Romania / PATRIR - Peace Action, Training and Research Institute of Romania
Serbia	Jankovic	Vojislav	Fundacija Erasmus +
Serbia	Jelaca	Ivana	Media Diversity Institute Western Balkans
Slovak Republic	Vicenova	Radka	REACH Institute
Turkey	Ilhanli	Mehmet	Turkish-Israeli Civil Society Forum

Ukraine	Bondarenko	Liudmyla	Congress of Ethnic Communities of Ukraine
Ukraine	Chupryna	Alevtyna	NGO 'European Youth Community'
United Kingdom	Jankovic	Sava	University of Dundee
United Kingdom	Charalambou	George	Faith Matters

Speakers

Surname:	First Name:	Organisation
Gomes	Rui	Head of the Education and Training Division, Youth Department, Council of Europe
Iganski	Paul	Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice at the Lancaster University Law school
Johnson	Matthew	Director of the Directorate for Democratic Citizenship and Participation of the Council of Europe
Mangrau	Sebastian	Advisor, Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights
Loddo	Giorgio	Secretariat to the General Rapporteur on combating racism and intolerance, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
Valenti	Stefano	European Commission against Racism and Intolerance of the Council of Europe
von Schnurbein	Katharina	Coordinator on combating antisemitism, European Commission

Facilitators and Rapporteur:

Surname:	First Name:	Organisation
Ettema	Menno	No Hate Speech Movement campaign coordinator, Youth Department, Council of Europe
Foldi	Laszlo	Online community Manager no hate speech movement / independent trainer
Juhasz	Vera	Rapporteur
Lecesne	Stephanie	CEJI a Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe
Nistor	Camelia	independent trainer

Daily Programme

Monday 8 May

Arrival participants

20.30 Informal welcome evening

Tuesday 9 May

9.00 Registration and travel reimbursement, dining hall

9.30 Opening and getting to know each other and the programme

11.00 Break

11.30 Understanding antisemitism and hate speech

13.00 Lunch

14.30 Understanding antisemitism and hate speech continues

16.00 Break

16.30 Antisemitic hate speech and hate speech in my reality

19.00 Dinner

Wednesday 10 May

The session on 10 May will be open to representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, campaign partners and activists from the city of Strasbourg, and Council of Europe staff.

9.00 Arrival of guests

9.15 Opening of the Day

Matthew Johnson, Director of the Directorate for Democratic Citizenship and Participation of the Council of Europe

9.30 Understanding online antisemitic hate speech today

Paul Iganski, Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice at the Lancaster University Law school

10.30 No Hate Speech Movement: campaigning for Human Rights online

11.00 Break

11.30 The need for a political response to antisemitism and hate speech

Giorgio Loddo, Secretariat to the General Rapporteur on combating racism and intolerance, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

11.50 Monitoring the implementation of the policy recommendations on antisemitism and hate speech in the member states

Stefano Valenti, European Commission against Racism and Intolerance of the Council of Europe

12.10 The importance of education and remembrance when combatting antisemitic hate speech

Sebastian Mangrau, Advisor, Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights

12.30 Lunch

14.00 European Commission activities aimed at combating antisemitic hate speech

Katharina von Schnurbein, Coordinator on combating antisemitism, European Commission

14.30 Working Groups on taking action against antisemitic hate speech, round 1

- 'Linguistic Self-Defence Guide Against Antisemitism' and 'Stopping Hate: How to Counter Hate Speech on Twitter', educating journalists and youth on language use when combatting hate speech, **Giulia Dessi**, Media Diversity Institute
- 'Jewish Pathfinders': Norwegian-Jewish young adults combatting prejudice in high schools - how and why?, **Natalie Preminger** and **Yuval Regev**, Jewish Pathfinder, No Hate Speech Movement Committee Norway
- 'Antisemitism then and now: fighting the old prejudices with new approaches', **Marcell Lorincz**, Board Member of ENAR

15.45 Break

16.15 Working Groups on taking action against antisemitic hate speech, round 2

- Taking (legal) action on online antisemitic hate speech in Belgium, **Leona Erens**, Unia - Interfederal Centre for Equal Opportunities
- 'de:hate', Monitoring hate speech and hateful narratives online, working with platform providers and developing counter strategies in Germany, **Johannes Baldauf**, Amadeu Antonio Stiftung

17.15 Plenary: Feedback and recommendations for future action from the working groups

18.30 Reception

19.00 Dinner

20.30 Visit to the Synagogue of Strasbourg (optional)

Thursday 11 May

9.30 Learning from practice

11.00 Break

11.30 Recommendations and plans for taking action on antisemitic hate speech, including the Action Day on 9 November 2017 and the promotion of Counter and Alternative Narratives.

13.00 Lunch

14.30 Recommendations and plans for taking actions on antisemitic hate speech continues

15.30 Presentation of recommendations and future plans

16.00 Break

16.30 Evaluation and closing of the seminar

19.00 Dinner and farewell party