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Words matter

Taking a stand against hate speech -
a response from the EEA and Norway Grants



Taking a stand against hate speech

Human rights experts, media and civil society organisations repeatedly issue findings revealing serious instances of violence, hostility, intolerance and discriminatory attitudes towards minorities. They are often fuelled by abusive discourse in the media.

This goes against the very ideas on which post-war Europe was founded. Human rights, democracy and the rule of law are at the heart of our European identity. It is important to protect the fundamental and human rights of everyone, be they ethnic, religious, sexual minorities or immigrants who are often the victims of hate speech and intolerance.

Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway are using the EEA and Norway Grants as a tool to raise awareness of hate speech and its risks for democracy, and promote tolerance and multicultural awareness.

Protecting minorities

The problems of discrimination and negative stereotyping of minorities are deeply rooted in the socio-economic and political context. Wide-ranging efforts are required, including in the areas of education, social dialogue, transparency and awareness-raising. At the same time, one of the most important tools – legislation – is not always up to international standards.

New communication technologies and social media have made it easier to spread extremist ideas, often facilitating the recruitment of like-minded persons and radicalisation of others. On the other hand, social media can also be used as a tool for positively influencing and inspiring both young people and older generations to play an active role in addressing hate speech and other forms of intolerance, especially online.

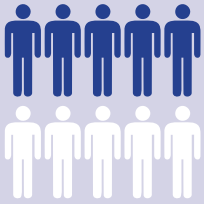
Curbing abuse

Civil society organisations are often at the forefront of combating intolerance and discrimination. They recognise early signs, monitor and report incidents and contribute to awareness-raising regarding the existence of discrimination, intolerance and hate crime. Civil society organisations are in a position to act as a voice for victims of hate speech and discrimination.

Through the EEA and Norway Grants, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway support a range of initiatives to tackle hate speech online and offline in the various funding sectors, primarily through civil society and our NGO programmes.



Discrimination and online hate speech in Europe



50%
ROMA

About half of Roma surveyed said that they have experienced discrimination in the past 12 months because of their ethnic background.

EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (2011) The situation of Roma in 11 EU Member States



Three out of four Europeans view the Roma as a group of people at risk of discrimination

European Commission (2012) Discrimination in the EU in 2012

SEXUAL ORIENTATION



In the last five years, a quarter of all respondents to a survey of LGBT people said they had been attacked or threatened with violence because of their sexuality, with almost half reporting discrimination*



As many as 15% said their most serious incidence of harassment was on the internet*

* EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (2013) EU LGBT survey
** European Commission (2012) Discrimination in the EU in 2012



Up to 1 in 5 of the 93,000 LGBT people surveyed across the EU said that their last harassment was online*



Close to half of Europeans believe that discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation is widespread in their country**

MINORITIES



of Europeans think that discrimination on grounds of ethnic origin is widespread

European Commission (2012) Discrimination in the EU in 2012



of survey respondents had personally experienced at least one incident of anti-semitic verbal insult or harassment, and/or a physical attack in the past 12 months

EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (2013) Survey on discrimination and hate crime against Jews

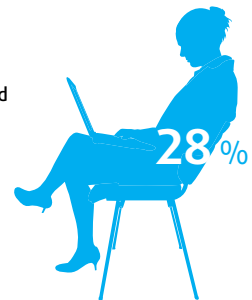
GENDER



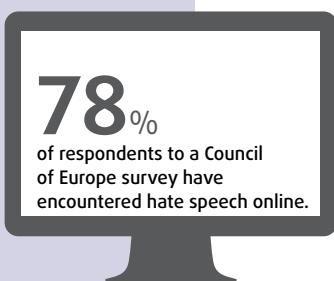
Up to 21% of young women have received unwanted sexually explicit emails or text messages

Up to 28% have been the target of offensive propositioning on social networking sites or internet chat rooms

All from EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (2013) Report of violence against women




HATE SPEECH ONLINE



Council of Europe (2012/13) Survey on young people's attitudes and experience of online hate speech

“...the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people.”

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

A large crowd of people is gathered for a Pride parade. In the foreground, a man in a blue t-shirt and sunglasses is smiling. Behind him, another man in a black t-shirt and sunglasses holds up a blue sign with handwritten text. The sign reads: "HOMOSEXUALITY IS FOUND IN OVER 450 SPECIES. HOMOPHOBIA IS FOUND IN ONLY ONE. WHICH ONE SEEMS UNNATURAL NOW?". To the left, a yellow sign is partially visible with the text "OUR CHROME HAVE CO BEAUTY". The background is filled with many other people, some wearing rainbow-colored clothing and holding flags.

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Action on hate speech

Worth €147 million, the NGO programmes are one of the biggest funding schemes for civil society in Central Europe. The primary aim is to strengthen the capacity of the sector itself as well as support non-governmental organisations in their efforts to promote human rights, democracy and equality.

NGO programmes have been set up in all beneficiary countries and actively address hate speech as well as tackle extremism, racism and xenophobia, homophobia and anti-Semitism. NGOs can apply directly to programmes for funding of projects that set out to counter or raise consciousness of hate speech.

Country	Fund Operator	Programme amount (€ million)
Bulgaria	Open Society Institute: bit.ly/1dIT8D4	11.8
Cyprus	Price Waterhouse Coopers: bit.ly/1hcuE1z	1.3
Czech Republic	Civil Society Development Foundation (NROS): bit.ly/17qyym2	9.8
Estonia	Open Estonia Foundation: bit.ly/Ht9w9l	2.3
Greece	The Bodossaki Foundation: bit.ly/1ayY3y6	6.3
Hungary	Hungarian Environmental Partnership Foundation (HEPF): bit.ly/Ht9LRK	12.6
Latvia	Society Integration Foundation: bit.ly/1chq5PS	10.9
Lithuania	Human Rights Monitoring Institute: bit.ly/18yZdHb	5.5
Malta	Solidarity Overseas Service Malta: bit.ly/1irFWwP	0.5
Poland	Stefan Batory Foundation: bit.ly/1hqx3Wz	37.0
Portugal	Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation: bit.ly/HtaiD8	5.8
Romania	Civil Society Development Foundation: bit.ly/1aEUGl7	30.0
Slovakia	Ekopolis Foundation (Active citizenship and inclusion): bit.ly/1oGM4sX Open Society Foundation (Human rights and democracy): bit.ly/HdJHdJ	3.45 3.45
Slovenia	Regional Environmental Center (REC Slovenia): bit.ly/196GYgr	1.9
Spain	NGO Platform of Social Action: bit.ly/HqHoEO	4.6
TOTAL		147.2

We also work to counter hatred, protect minorities and strengthen fundamental rights through various EEA and Norway Grants programmes in other areas – migration and asylum, gender equality and gender-based violence, trafficking, cultural heritage and diversity, social inclusion, fairer justice systems and research and education.

November 2012
Conference on 'Tackling Hate Speech: Living Together Online' with Council of Europe (Budapest)
bit.ly/QLmuTY

March 2013
Launch of the NO HATE SPEECH MOVEMENT campaign and online platform
bit.ly/1aoJhxj

2012-2013 →

- Awareness-raising of hate speech during training for all NGO Programme Operators throughout year

Snapshot of activities

Campaign against racism and hate violence in Czech Republic

In response to rising levels of extremism and racism and ever increasing incidence of hate violence, in particular against Roma, the Grants are supporting a nationwide media campaign against racism and hate violence.

Aimed at young people aged 15-25, the campaign will be broadcast on national TV and radio as well as online. The project will also support research into Roma migration and develop educational activities in schools.

Reviving the memory of Jewish history and culture in Poland

On the eve of World War II Poland had the largest Jewish population in Europe. More than 3 million Polish Jews were killed in the Holocaust; thousands more left after the war. The Grants are contributing €3 million to support outreach activities at the recently opened Museum of the History of Polish Jews.

Located in Warsaw, the museum's information and awareness-raising programmes are designed for children, young people and teachers both in and outside Poland. Norwegian Centres of Expertise on Jewish heritage and anti-Semitism are involved in developing the project.

Study on hate crime victims in Lithuania

Violence and crimes motivated by prejudice are a daily reality across the EU. But with victims often reluctant to speak out, many crimes remain unreported and unprosecuted.

To complement work carried out by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency and fill a gap in data collection, the EEA Grants are funding an in-depth study looking at the rights of hate crime victims in Lithuania.

This study will analyse procedural guarantees available to hate crime victims and compare current practices in Lithuania against EU standards.

Anti-discrimination Bulgarian radio show

Roma are traditionally the group most affected by discrimination in Bulgaria but there are signs that the Muslim community is increasingly subjected to hostile attitudes. The EEA Grants are funding the production of a weekly radio programme on a private national channel.

The programme will focus on personal stories, looking at problems of intolerance and discrimination facing minority groups in Bulgaria. Five internships for young journalists of Roma origin will also be funded by the project.

● May 2013

Conference on 'Right-Wing Extremism and Hate Crime in Europe' (Oslo)
bit.ly/13uy3m5

● September 2013

Conference on 'Hate Factor in Political Speech' (Warsaw) (Organised by the Polish Government and Council of Europe)
bit.ly/14B000a

2013-2014 →

- Youth visual art competition on hate speech Sept 2013-February 2014 (Latvian NGO programme)
- Training for youth bloggers in Czech Republic, Poland, Latvia and Lithuania
- Ongoing support for NO HATE SPEECH MOVEMENT campaign

Word on the street – training for youth bloggers

The ever growing number of social media platforms and online activity increase the risks of running into inappropriate websites and images. It also increases the risk of anonymous threats, abuse and cyber-bullying.

Anna Gotowska works for an NGO and was one of the Polish youth bloggers who took part in a 'blogger' training course funded by the Grants in 2013. She said: "It was really useful to have a chance to learn about tools available to combat the prevalent problem of online hate speech. There is a wealth of information out there and following the dedicated training, we are also now in a better position to inform others."

Fighting homophobia in Slovakia

Discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) communities is unfortunately all too common in Slovakia.

To address that, the Grants are funding a series of cultural and information activities to raise awareness of the impact of perceptions of homophobia on LGBT people. Research is to be carried out on LGBT issues and history of activism which has never been done before, with the aim that this will lead to better understanding and tolerance.

Breaking down Roma stereotypes in Latvia

Roma are the poorest and the least integrated ethnic group in Latvian society. Aiming to reduce prejudices and negative stereotypes against the Roma community, the Grants are supporting a project to promote education and awareness of Roma culture, life and history.

Carried out by the Roma Cultural Centre NGO, activities include the organisation of a Youth Forum called "Meet Roma in Latvia-Destroy the Stereotypes", discussion workshops for students and an essay contest.

Supporting the Home for Cooperation in Cyprus

The EEA and Norway Grants are supporting the Home for Cooperation (H4C) in Cyprus - a bi-communal activity centre and the first ever shared space for Cypriots to engage in historical research, dialogue and peace-building.

Since opening in 2011, the H4C has become a lively meeting place for Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots alike. Located in the Nicosia buffer zone, the centre has become a symbol of cooperation, creating a welcoming environment for people from both communities. The ongoing support aims to ensure the continued sustainability of the H4C.

● November 2013

- Campaign for 'International Day of Tolerance' (Czech NGO Programme)
- Campaign conference of the NO HATE SPEECH MOVEMENT (Strasbourg)
- FRA conference on 'Combating Hate Crime in the EU' (Vilnius) bit.ly/1aWrVsF

● January 2014

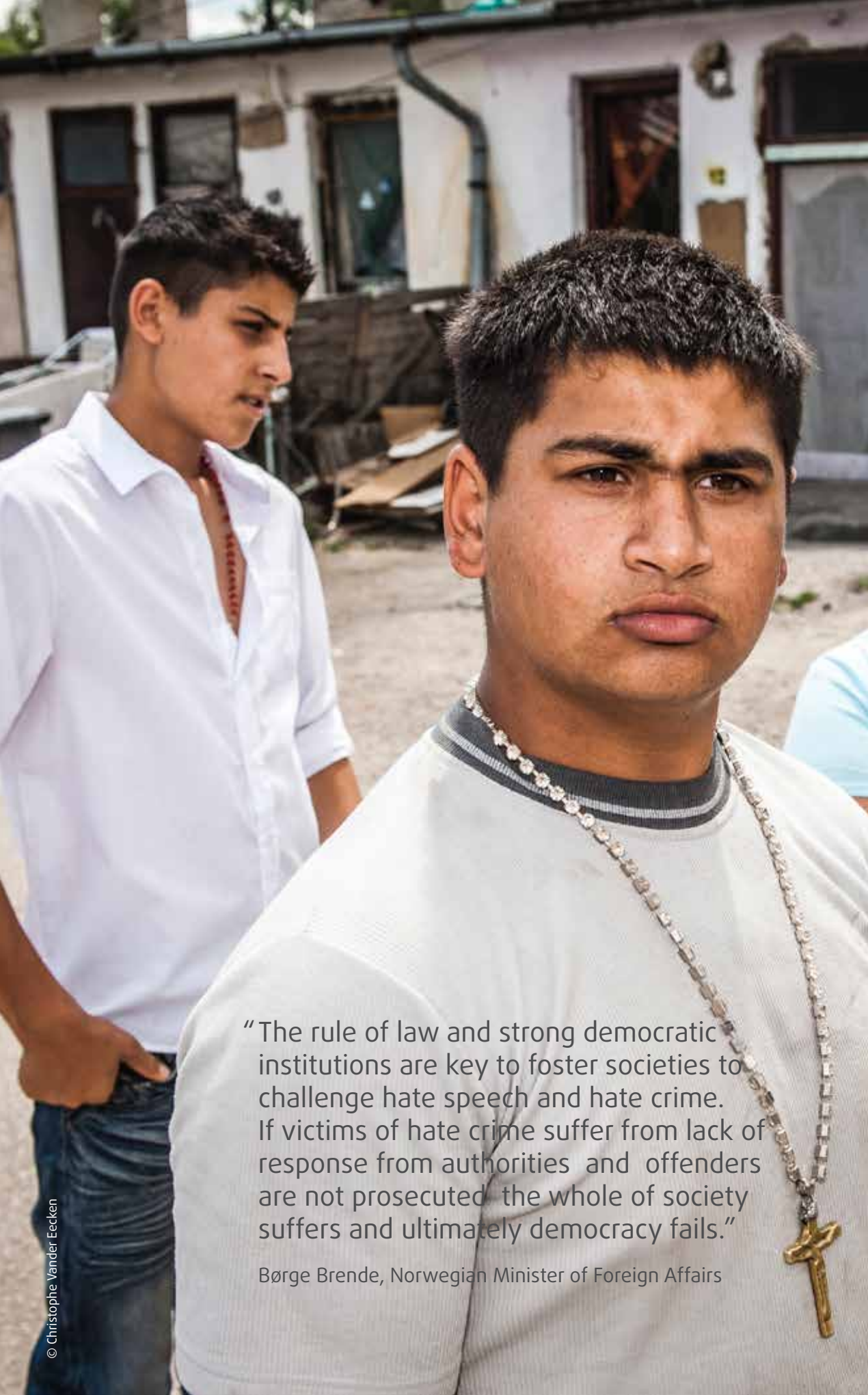
- Media training on hate speech (Latvian NGO programme)

● February 2014

- Council of Europe Action Day – Safer Internet Day

2015-2016 →

- Series of countryside workshops to help NGOs develop activities around human rights and tolerance (Hungarian NGO programme)
- Ongoing implementation of projects to combat hate speech through NGO and other Grant programmes



“The rule of law and strong democratic institutions are key to foster societies to challenge hate speech and hate crime. If victims of hate crime suffer from lack of response from authorities and offenders are not prosecuted, the whole of society suffers and ultimately democracy fails.”

Børge Brende, Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs

On the margins

Europe has always been a multicultural continent. But the Europe's history is also rife with prejudice against groups and individuals because of their race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or other differences. Discrimination, hostility and unequal treatment persist today.

"You go to bed with fear and wake up with fear. You know that anytime they can come, and you are left [with no roof over your head]...Where should I take my children?"

Rodica is 55 years old and has lived in Craica – a Romani settlement in the north-western city of Baia Mare – in Romania for 20 years with her husband and children. The authorities have been trying to clear the settlement for a number of years. Her family feel their lives have been shattered by the evictions in their community. The threat of losing their home is now permanent feature of their lives.

(Text reproduced courtesy of © Amnesty International)

"Then they came after me riding their motorbike along the road near me, one of them rode the motorbike over my leg and the other hit me with a stick on my back...I lay on the ground and then they hit me and they beat me up, then they left me."

Jereer K., a 17 year old undocumented Somali, was attacked in November 2011 by four men and two women on motorcycles near Aghios Panteleimonas square in Greece.

(Text reproduced courtesy of © Human Rights Watch))

"Gay, lesbian and transgender people face shocking levels of violence, discrimination and abuse across Europe, with gaps in EU and national legislation robbing them of justice and creating a climate of fear.

From the Amnesty International Report "Because of who I am" (September 2013)

Working in partnership

To combat intolerance and hate speech, governments, international organisations, civil society and the internet industry need to work together.

The EEA and Norway Grants entered into a partnership with the Council of Europe to strengthen the focus on fundamental rights in our programmes. Since its inception in 1949, the Council of Europe has been the standard bearer of democracy, human rights and the rule of law across the continent.

The Council of Europe is involved in 20 programmes in nine beneficiary countries - Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Hungary, Latvia, Malta, Poland, Romania and Slovakia. The partnership draws on the Council's wealth of experience in areas such as justice reform, fighting corruption and promoting inclusion.

In particular, we are working in close collaboration as a strategic partner to the Council of Europe's Europe-wide NO HATE SPEECH campaign of young people for human rights online.

We also engage with the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) on issues of shared interest such as discrimination, mutually reinforcing knowledge exchange and information dissemination. The EEA and Norway Grants are a key partner of the FRA conference 'Combating Hate Crime in the EU' (Vilnius, November 2013) and are in ongoing close dialogue to scope out areas for potential future cooperation.

"Hate speech on- and offline is not just a matter of words – it is a stepping stone to discrimination and violence against others. The cooperation between the EEA and Norway Grants and the Council of Europe creates a dynamic and effective collaboration. The expertise of the Council of Europe in the core areas of human rights, rule of law and democracy combined with the funding of the Grants means we can expand our reach and improve the lives of millions of Europeans."

Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary General of Council of Europe

© Financial Mechanism Office



Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary General of the Council of Europe (right) with Michal Boni, Minister of Administration and Digitization of Poland at the conference 'The Hate Factor in Political Speech' in Warsaw in September 2013.

NO
HATE

The **NO HATE SPEECH MOVEMENT** is a campaign devised by young people to raise awareness of the issue of online hate speech. Launched in March 2013, the movement has national campaigns all across Europe involving young people online and offline.

The aim is to take action against hate speech – not to limit freedom of expression. All our NGO programmes are engaged in the campaign which runs until the end of 2014, helping to:

- > Link Grant operators with national campaign coordinators
- > Organise training workshops for youth bloggers
- > Disseminate educational and campaigning tools

Ten ways we are challenging hate speech

- 1. Act** – fighting hate speech in all forms is a focus in many programmes of the Grants
“Civil society should play a more proactive role in addressing hate speech. The NGO programmes can contribute by bringing the issue into the public debate.” Veronika Móra, Director, Hungarian NGO Fund.
- 2. Unite** – active engagement in the Council of Europe NO HATE SPEECH campaign
All NGO programmes in all the beneficiary countries are actively publicising and engaging in the campaign.
- 3. Empower** – minority groups like Roma and victims of discrimination
Projects in Slovakia help improve Romani language education and integration of Roma youngsters in schools.
- 4. Inform** – raise consciousness of hate speech through conferences and workshops
The Grants are supporting events like the Open Society Forum on Hate Speech in Estonia and the Romanian NGO fair.
- 5. Educate** – project promoters, media and bloggers to reduce acceptance of online hate speech
The Grants have supported a media workshop in Latvia and ‘Youth Blogger’ courses in several countries.
- 6. Respect** – for cultural diversity and mutual tolerance
In Poland, education activities for students and teachers help to raise awareness of the culture of Polish Jews.
- 7. Speak up** - against trivialisation of vicious attacks online and risks for democracy
Romania is supporting a seminar (‘TED talk’) bringing inspirational speakers to motivate participants to ‘speak up’.
- 8. Share** – good practice initiatives fighting hate speech and extremism online
Hungary is compiling an on-line database of good practices in tackling discrimination, hate speech and hate crime.
- 9. Mobilise** - youth activists to counter discrimination and create positive alternatives
Slovakia is organising a contest for young creative professionals to develop a campaign to stand up to cyber-hate.
- 10. Monitor** – through research, surveys and mapping of hate speech online
A research survey on hate speech compiling data on current trends has been carried out in Bulgaria.



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About the EEA and Norway Grants

Through the EEA (European Economic Area) and Norway Grants, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway help to reduce economic and social disparities and to strengthen bilateral relations with 15 EU countries in Central and Southern Europe. Norway contributes 97% of the funding.

€1.78 billion in funding

15 beneficiary countries

Areas of support:

Civil society

Human and social development

Environment and climate change

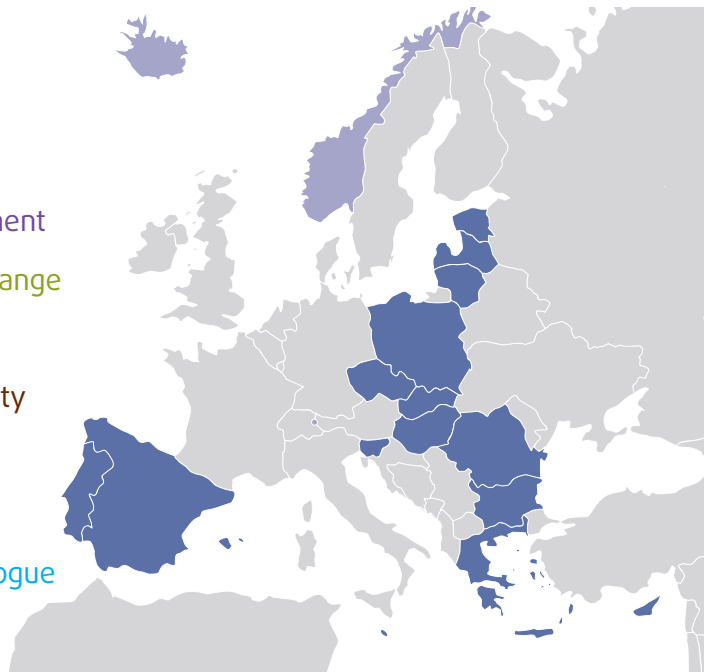
Green industry innovation

Cultural heritage and diversity

Research and scholarships

Justice and home affairs

Decent work and social dialogue



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