

No Hate Speech Week 2024

Strasbourg, 17-20 June 2024

Call for participants

Background

At the Summit of 46 Council of Europe member states in Reykjavik in May 2023, Heads of State and Government promised to ensure equality, combat any kind of discrimination and strengthen work towards inclusive societies. They have committed to ensuring a life free from violence, fear, harassment, hate speech and hate crime - a life free of discrimination based on any ground.

The Council of Europe has been a front runner in [combating hate speech](#) through its standard setting, monitoring of their implementation, and targeted cooperation programmes¹. The Committee of Ministers took an essential step during their Ministerial meeting in Rome under the Italian Presidency in May 2022 by adopting Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2022\)16](#) on Combating Hate Speech. The Recommendation provides a definition of hate speech and proposes legal and non-legal measures to prevent and combat it within a human rights framework for state authorities and other relevant stakeholders, including public officials, elected bodies and political parties, internet intermediaries, media and civil society organisations. The Council of Europe actively engages with its member states, to support the implementation of this and other Recommendations², ECRI's General Policy Recommendations, and the case law of the European Court of Human Rights addressing discrimination and hate on and offline.

In December 2023 the European Commission and the High Representative adopted a [Joint Communication on "No place for hate: a Europe united against hatred"](#). The Communication aims to step up EU efforts to fight hatred in all its forms, by reinforcing action across a variety of policies. These include stepping up the work on combating hate speech online through an upgrade of the [Code of conduct](#) agreed with major online platforms.

The Council of Europe continuously co-operates with EU agencies and international organisations in the context of the EU High Level Group on combating hate speech and hate crime, and through EU-CoE joint programmes.

In this context, the joint project "[Increasing civil society organisations' knowledge and capacity to counter hate speech online](#)" aims to increase exchanges of knowledge and strengthened capacity and coordination between CSOs and other partners who respond to hate speech online using counter and alternative narratives (CANS), educational and awareness raising measures, and shall evaluate their

¹ For overview of the CoE's work on combating hate speech see: www.coe.int/combating-hate-speech

² Among others, GREVIO [General Recommendation No.1 on the digital dimension of violence against women](#), [CM/Rec\(2019\)1 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on preventing and combating sexism](#), [CM/Rec\(2018\)2 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the roles and responsibilities of internet intermediaries](#), and [CM/Rec\(2014\)6 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on a Guide to human rights for Internet users](#).

effect. The project is co-funded by the European Union and Council of Europe and implemented by the Council of Europe until December 2024.

No Hate Speech Week

The No Hate Speech Week, 17-20 June 2024, is organised around the International Day for Countering Hate Speech on 18 June. In 2021, the UN General Assembly highlighted global concerns over “the exponential spread and proliferation of hate speech”. It adopted a resolution which recognises the need to counter discrimination, xenophobia and hate speech and calls on all relevant actors, including states, to increase their efforts to address this phenomenon, in line with international human rights law. The resolution proclaimed **18 June** as the **International Day for Countering Hate Speech**.

The No Hate Speech Week aims to provide a space to exchange on recent legal and policy developments and good practices of implementation, innovations and foster synergies between key partners in field of combating hate speech. The presence of different stakeholders provides networking opportunities that can enable a comprehensive and multi-stakeholder approach to preventing and combating hate speech in the member states. The week is organised by the Anti-discrimination Department in the framework of the EU-CoE joint project [Building Civil Society's capacities to tackle hate speech online](#) and supported by the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of Europe.

Theme for 2024: “Speak human rights, counter hate speech”

The use of counter speech and the promotion of a culture of human rights are key non-legal measures to prevent and combat hate speech. The Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)16 on Combating Hate Speech³ calls on member states, as part of a comprehensive approach to preventing and combating hate speech, to take a range of concrete measures to promote awareness raising, education, training, counter-speech, alternative speech and intercultural dialogue. Key stakeholders are also encouraged to engage, including:

- Public figures, such as politicians, high-level officials and religious, economic and community leaders to firmly and promptly condemn the use of hate speech, use counter and alternative speech and promote intergroup understanding, including by expressing solidarity with those targeted by hate speech.
- Media and journalists to promote a culture of tolerance and understanding, and in their efforts to provide accurate and reliable information, avoid derogatory stereotypical depiction of individuals, groups and communities and give voice to diverse groups and communities in society.
- Practitioners, educators and CSOs engaged in formal and non-formal educational activities and cultural programmes to enhance commitment to human rights as part of a pluralistic democratic society, encourage critical thinking, promote equality and intercultural and interfaith dialogue, and strengthen the competences needed to identify and counter hate speech.

The Council of Europe has produced tools to design effective counter narratives, and education and awareness raising initiatives, in the framework of the No Hate Speech Movement Youth campaign and cooperation programmes⁴. While reporting and the removal of online hate speech reaching threshold of criminal liability is important, it is equally essential to address all forms of hate speech and address the societal challenges and its root causes through prevention, education and awareness-raising

³ See among others paragraphs 28, 39, 46 – 49, 51-52, 53-54 of CM/Rec(2022)16 on combating hate speech.

⁴ See among others Educational manuals [Bookmarks](#) and [We CAN!](#) and the online tools of the CoE-EU project [“We CAN for human rights speech”](#)

initiatives. To ensure effective and impactful activities in this area, support to civil society organisations (CSOs) operating on the ground must be ensured, in particular by collecting and sharing the tools and knowledge developed over the years.

Methodological approach of the week - a collective success

The No Hate Speech Week aims to inform and facilitate peer-to-peer exchange of knowhow and practice and will therefore deploy a variety of methodological approaches, namely:

- **Plenary sessions** to open the No Hate Speech Week, review the political directions on combating hate speech and take stock of the discussions and commitments made by the participants.
- **Workshops and working groups** – The Anti-Discrimination Department will co-organise a series of workshops and working groups on range of topics with CSO partners, other CoE bodies and international partners. The workshops aim to be practical and facilitate exchange of experiences, resources, and tools on education and training, counter-narratives to hate speech, awareness-raising initiatives, hate speech and media, hate speech in sports, hate speech targeting LGBTI persons, Roma, minorities, and hate speech spreading sexism, anti-migrant and xenophobic narratives.
- **Networking spaces** – The networking space may include a project fair, or an exhibition of tools and resources, and informal discussion tables hosted by CoE entities, CSO partners or other stakeholders. The methodology will be adopted to the expressed interests received through the call of participants.
- **Award ceremony and receptions** – There will be reception and award ceremony *hosted by the Lithuanian presidency* for the journalists promoting a positive image of Roma.

A synopsis of the Week can be found in Annex 1.

The No Hate Speech Week takes place in parallel to other meeting of CoE Bodies including the European Steering Committee on Anti-discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI), the European Steering Committee on Media and Information Society, and the anti-rumours training course of the Intercultural Cities Programme, among others who will also engage in the programme of the Week.

Presenting a good practice

The participants of the No Hate Speech Week are invited to present good practices from their work on countering hate speech. The presentations can have different formats such as:

- A Poster prepared for the project fair, or an exhibition of tools and resources which can be shared with other participants.
- Contribution to a thematic workshop or co-running a workshop with other participants.
- Activities during the networking event such as contribution on the informal discussion tables around topics related to your work on countering hate speech.
- Other contribution from your practice which you would like to share with other participants.

Please provide in your application form more details about a good practice or tool you would like to share during the week. In case you do not have a specific good practice to share, you can add some information about the themes of your work that you would like to discuss with others during the networking space.

Profile of participants – learning together

The Council of Europe invites participants from its member states active on combating hate speech, in particular those who represent CSOs active at European and national levels, national authorities, as also representatives of Equality bodies and Ombudsoffices, academia, internet industry etc. to apply and take part in the No Hate Speech Week. The week will also gather elected officials, governmental representatives, and representatives working in the media, sports sector and local regional authorities.

Some 50 participants will be invited following this public call for expression of interest. Selection will be made based on experience and potential to engage in peer-to-peer exchange on evolving practices, projects and policies, ensuring a geographical and gender balance, and diversity of experiences and contributions. The applicants for the No Hate Speech Week 2024 should ideally fulfil the following selection criteria:

1. Based and actively working in any of the Council of Europe's member states.
2. Demonstrate experience in countering hate speech through a support letter from a nominating CSO, local and national authorities, equality bodies/ombudsoffices, academic institution, tech company or other private or public entity engaged in this topic.
3. Ability to work in English.
4. Ability to act as a multiplier in addressing hate speech within different contexts; and with different stakeholders is an asset.
5. Willingness to present their work on countering hate speech through a workshop or a poster for the networking event is an asset.

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

Financial and practical conditions for participation

Travel expenses

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

Accommodation

Board and lodging for the No Hate Speech Week will be provided and paid for by the Council of Europe. The Council of Europe will ensure if needed, accessible accommodation to people with disabilities and can take measures to accommodate for specific needs of participants in this respect. Please provide the necessary information in your application form.

Working languages

English will be the working language of the No Hate Speech Week. Participants are required to be able to express themselves autonomously in English.

How to apply to this call

All candidates must apply by filling in the application form [available here](https://forms.office.com/e/trUANeVtXC) - <https://forms.office.com/e/trUANeVtXC>

The Council of Europe will select some 50 participants on the basis of the profile outlined above. It will try as far as possible to respect the organisations' priorities, but also to ensure a balance between genders, geographical regions, different types of experiences, cultural backgrounds and organisations, institutions and projects. A waiting list may be established.

The application form must be submitted on-line until 1 April 2024, 23.59 CET.

For further information, please contact Stefan Manevski at anti-discrimination@coe.int

Appendix 1: Synoptic overview of the draft programme of the No Hate Speech Week 2024 in Strasbourg

	Monday, 17 June	Tuesday, 18 June		Thursday, 20 June	Friday, 21 June
First part of the morning	Arrival of participants and registration	Opening plenary – Official opening of the No Hate Speech Week	Thematic Plenary	Workshops	Departures
Second part of the morning		Plenary continues with expert inputs	Workshops		
First part of the afternoon	Introduction session for the participants of the No Hate Speech Week	Workshops	Workshops	Closing plenary – taking stock of the Week	
Second part of the afternoon			Award ceremony and Reception for Journalists promoting positive image of Roma	Networking space	Networking space
		Presentation of the CDADI/CDMSI report on Promising practices on combating hate speech			
Evening					