



Why are we holding this conference?

Hatred, exclusion and verbal violence pose a growing threat to our democracies. Hate speech violates human rights, corrodes the culture of debate within our democratic, pluralistic societies and drives people out of the public arena. Words are often followed by deeds. Actively combatting hate and ensuring that the law is enforced online just as elsewhere, while at the same time defending freedom of speech, are key challenges for political institutions and civil society across Europe.

While hate speech is not a purely online phenomenon, the internet offers a significant echo chamber, whether in public forums or in closed groups. We must not accept this. We must work resolutely to ensure that legal limits are observed, including online, and to promote non-violent, democratic debate. This requires a coordinated effort by governments and civil society in the 47 member states of the Council of Europe.

As a guardian of human rights, democracy and the rule of law, the Council of Europe has a central role to play in tackling hate speech. Germany aims to support and advance the Council of Europe's work during its Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers (from 18 November 2020 to 21 May 2021).

What part does the Council of Europe play in the fight against hate speech? What must be done to continue developing a Europe-wide strategy? What has been learnt in the member states with regard to regulation, supervision, law enforcement and political education? What work is being done by European civil society organisations?

Our objectives:

Hate speech has many faces, and the counter-strategies must be just as multifaceted. We will unpack this toxic phenomenon, tackle its individual components and put together a package of counter-strategies.

Join us on **18 February 2021** at the online conference Unboxing Hate Speech: European Impulses for Respect and Solidarity on the Web, organised by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, the German Federal Foreign Office and the Federal Ministry of Justice and Consumer Protection as part of Germany's Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

How can you take part?

The conference will be live-streamed on this page. You can also use the instant messaging feature to engage in discussion and respond to polls.

The workspaces will be held via Zoom and access will be restricted. Participation is by invitation only.

Programme

- 10.00 Welcome!
Opening speech by **Martin Schulz**, head of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
- 10.10 **Unboxing Hate Speech on the Web**
A priority of Germany's Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe
Chaired discussion with
Christine Lambrecht, Federal Minister of Justice and Consumer Protection
and
Heiko Maas, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs
Moderation: **Sabrina N'Diaye**, TV presenter and journalist
- 10.45 **Towards democratic coexistence**
How the Council of Europe is fighting hate speech
Key Note Speech by **Marija Pejčinović Burić**, Secretary General of the Council of Europe
- 11.00 **United against hate speech**
Challenges and counter-strategies
Panel discussion with:
Karoline Edtstadler, Federal Minister for the EU and Constitution, Austria
Snežana Samardžić-Marković, Director General of DG Democracy, Council of Europe
Markus Reinisch, Vice President Public Policy Europe, Middle East, Africa, Facebook
Julia Mozer, Communication and Policy Officer, CEJI - A Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe
Moderation: **Sabrina N'Diaye**, TV presenter and journalist
- 12.15 Lunch break
- 1.00 **What can we do to fight hate speech?**

<p>Open Workspace <i>VIA LIVESTREAM</i></p> <p>Hands up! How do you personally experience hate speech? Discussion with Louisa Dellert, influencer and businessperson</p> <p>Hands down (on the keyboard)! The basics of counter-speech. What are the “dos and don’ts” to remember? Try it out with us! First steps towards a strong counter-speech post with Hannes Ley, #ichbinhier</p>	<p>Workspaces <i>For a specialist audience, by invitation only. The workspaces will be held in English without interpretation (with the exception of workspace 1).</i></p> <p>Workspace 1: Hate speech in political communication <i>(with simultaneous interpretation German-English/English-German)</i> With Karamba Diaby, Member of the German Bundestag, and Carl Miller, Research Director of the Centre for the Analysis of Social Media, Demos, United Kingdom</p>
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<p>When counter-speech no longer works – criminal justice aspects of hate speech and the path to taking legal action</p> <p>Discussion with Dr. Christoph Hebbecker, Cologne public prosecution office, North Rhine Westphalia cybercrime office (ZAC NRW)</p> <p>What have we learnt? Where is there a need for action?</p> <p>Discussion with Louisa Dellert, Hannes Ley and Dr. Christoph Hebbecker</p> <p>Moderation: Tanja Hille, consultant and presenter</p> <p><u>More details on the content of the open workspace</u></p>	<p>Moderation: Sina Laubenstein, Project Lead with the No Hate Speech Movement, New German Media Professionals (NDM)</p> <p>Workspace 2: Hate speech as youth (anti)culture?</p> <p>With Emilija Gagrčin, member of the Council of Europe’s Advisory Council on Youth and the European Federation for Intercultural Learning, and Nika Bakhsoliani, Human Rights Education Youth Network</p> <p>Moderation: Deborah Woldemichael and Stefanie Fächner, State Media Authority of Rhineland-Palatinate</p> <p>Workspace 3: Hate speech and local involvement</p> <p>With Tjark Bartels, district chief executive a.D., district Hameln-Pyrmont, and Péter Niedermüller, Mayor of Erzsébetváros district in Budapest, Hungary</p> <p>Moderation: Anne Haller, head of the political education centre KommunalAkademie NRW, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung</p> <p>Workspace 4: Hate speech against marginalised groups</p> <p>With Tímea Junghaus, Director of the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERAC), and Juliana Santos Wahlgren, Senior Advocacy Officer, European Network Against Racism</p> <p>Moderation: Gilda Sahebi, project leader with the No Hate Speech Movement, New German Media Professionals (NDM)</p> <p>Workspace 5: Antifeminist hate speech online</p> <p>With Anne Wizorek, digital strategy consultant, author and feminist activist, Germany, and Svetlana Zakharova, feminist and board member at the organisation Russian LGBT Network</p> <p>Moderation: Julia Bläsius, gender politics expert, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung</p> <p><u>More details on the content of the workspaces</u></p>
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2.45

Wrap-up

What are the next steps at European level?

Flashlights: what shall we take with us?

Rita Hagl-Kehl, Parliamentary State Secretary for Justice and Consumer Protection

Jeroen Schokkenbroek, Director of Anti-Discrimination in the Directorate General of Democracy, Council of Europe

Web hall meeting with

Michael Roth, Minister of State for Europe at the Federal Foreign Office and Special Representative of the Federal Government for the German Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe

Moderation: **Sabrina N'Diaye**, TV presenter and journalist

4.00

End of conference

There will be musical acts by Tal Arditi.