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Utøya Training Course on Counter and Alternative Narratives to Hate Speech

**16-20 October 2017,
Utøya Island, Norway**

With the support of the EEA and Norway Grants



Background information

The [No Hate Speech Movement](#) (NHSM) is a youth campaign launched by the Council of Europe in 2013 to mobilise young people to combat hate speech on and offline and to act for human rights. The campaign is driven by the need to counter online hate speech in all its forms, including those that most affect young people. It is based upon human rights education, youth participation and media literacy.

In the current phase of the campaign specific emphasis is placed on combating hate speech through counter narratives that promote human rights values and reporting hate speech content with the relevant authorities. In support of these priorities, a mapping of [national reporting mechanisms](#) and [social media platforms](#) and “[We CAN!](#)” a manual on developing counter and alternative narratives to hate speech for youth workers and educators, were launched spring 2017.

In October 2017 The Youth Department of the Council of Europe and the [European Wergeland Centre](#) (EWC) are organising a 5 day training course at Utøya in Norway, based on the new manual. The attack on the government buildings in Oslo and the political summer camp on Utøya 22 July 2011 in Norway was executed by a right-wing extremist who was active in online forums and social media spreading dehumanising hate speech.

Both the attack 22 July 2011 and other recent attacks and hate crimes in Europe, show that democracy and human rights cannot be taken for granted. To build open and inclusive societies educating young people for democracy and human rights is key. Not only to *prevent* hate speech, hate ideologies and violent extremism to spread, but to *promote* democracy, human rights and active citizenship.

We CAN! – manual on counter and alternative narratives to hate speech

A narrative is a logical, internally coherent ‘story’ that reports and interprets connected events or pieces of information that makes sense to the reader/listener. The problem arises when one narrative is presented as the only right or normal one, denying alternatives. Counter and alternative narratives combat hate speech by discrediting, and deconstructing the narratives on which it is based. The manual “We CAN!” proposes (alternative) narratives based on human rights and democratic values, such as openness, respect for difference, freedom and equality.

The manual proposes a set of online and off-line communication and educational approaches and tools to undermine narratives that sustain and legitimise hate speech. It aims to strengthen the toolboxes of youth workers, educators and activists already engaged in human rights work and education or willing to. It is divided in three sections that:

- Define and explain hate speech, and how it develops and spreads online
- Introduce the concept of narratives and define counter and alternative narratives
- Provide action-oriented step-by-step guidance to develop counter and alternative narratives to combat hate speech, offering tips, examples, and practical tools.

It compliments "[Bookmarks](#)", the manual on combatting hate speech through human rights education provides youth workers and educators' information and educational activities for youth to understand hate speech and the treat it poses to human rights and democracy.

The dissemination of the manual 'We CAN!' will be supported by training courses for youth workers, educators, activists and others seeking effective responses to hate speech.

Organisers

The **European Wergeland Centre** (EWC) is a resource centre on education for democratic citizenship, human rights and intercultural understand. It was established by the Council of Europe and Norway in 2008, with a mandate to support member states implement Council of Europe policies in practice. EWC designs and offers trainings and educational programmes to educational professionals and civil society actors based on Council of Europe teaching and learning resources, including Bookmarks and We CAN!. EWC is a partner of Utøya and the 22.July Center on educational programmes on 22 July and education for democratic citizenship and human rights.

The [Youth Department of the Council of Europe](#) launched the No Hate Speech Movement campaign in 2013 on the initiative of the Youth Representatives in its statutory bodies. It coordinates the European-wide campaign activities and supports the national campaigns through capacity building and knowledge sharing activities. The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 47 member states, 28 of which are members of the European Union. All member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

Utøya AS is the operating company that manages Utøya. The mandate of the company is to facilitate events and activities which promote democracy and exchange of opinions, and preserve Utøya as a place for commemoration and learning for current and future generations, as well as develop Utøya as an important camp-, course- and meeting place.

Supporting partner

The **EEA Grants/Norway Grants** has strongly supported The No Hate Speech Movement in several ways, both European and national campaign activities. In the new programme 2014-2021, outlined in the "Blue Book", strong support continues for efforts to combat hate speech, in particular in programme 15 'Civil Society'.

The Training Course

The Youth Department of the Council of Europe and the EWC is organising a 5 day training course based on "We CAN!" to support its wider dissemination through the national campaigns, and partners of EWC and the EEA and Norway Grants.

The training course will take place on Utøya in Norway, the site of the terror attack on 22 July 2011. As part of the rebuilding of Utøya following the terrorist attack on 22 July 2011,

the new memorial- and learning centre, *Hegnhuset*, was completed during the summer of 2016. The learning center offers a unique opportunity for young people to reflect on what democracy means for them, what are the challenges and threats to democracy, and how they as active citizens can promote democracy in their everyday lives. The EWC and Utøya have facilitated several workshops for young people at Utøya since the opening of Hegnhuset in 2016.

The training course invites participants from the national campaigns who can act as potential multipliers in their countries. As such, it will be a great opportunity to both develop a comprehensive training programme on counter narratives and hate speech, based on the two Council of Europe manuals that could be replicated and rolled out at national level through a European network of multipliers of the No Hate Speech Movement National campaigns and partners of the EWC and the EEA and Norway Grants.

Aim and Objectives

The training course will develop the competences of youth workers, youth leaders and educators to work with young people to develop counter and alternative narratives to hate speech based on the manual 'WE CAN'.

The project objectives include to:

- Develop participants' competences to use counter and alternative narratives to promote human rights and democratic values
- Develop participants' competences to use the manual 'We CAN' with young people.
- Develop proposals for off-/online initiatives to integrate counter and alternative narratives in the European and national initiatives to combat hate speech
- Strengthen the response of national campaigns and programme partners to hate speech through education for human rights and democracy by making use of counter and alternative narratives
- Increase expertise of EWC and the Youth Department of the Council of Europe to support its partners in using counter and alternative narratives.

Profile of participants

The training course will invite 35 campaign activists, youth workers, youth leaders and educators active with young people on combatting hate speech through awareness-raising and educational activities.

All participants should:

- Be experienced with conducting initiatives that take action on hate speech and/or discrimination and aim to strengthen human rights and democracy.
- Be active in one of the EEA and Norway Grants beneficiary or donor countries Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Malta, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Portugal and/or the donor countries Lichtenstein, Iceland and Norway
- Be in a position to transfer the gained competences in one of the EEA and Norway Grants beneficiary or donor countries listed above.
- Have working knowledge of English.

We welcome applications from all candidates who fulfill the above mentioned profile, irrespective of gender, disability, marital or parental status, racial, ethnic or social origin, colour, religion, belief or sexual orientation.

Application procedure and deadlines

The Youth Department is now opening the call for participants for this training seminar. All interested candidates must apply online, completing the application form through this link: <http://youthapplications.coe.int/Application-forms>

The application must be submitted **by 30 August 2017, at noon, Central European Time.**

All applicants will be notified of the selection results by 8 September.

Practical and financial conditions

Venue and accommodation

The training course will be hosted at the Memorial- and learning centre Utøya, Utøya Island, Norway.

Travel expenses

All travel expenses to and from the training venue will be managed and reimbursed according to the rules of the European Wergeland Centre.

Working languages

The working languages will be English.

Visas

Visa costs will be reimbursed by the EWC. The EWC will issue an invitation letter that should facilitate the delivery of visas to attend the training course.

Further information

For further information please email at i.aspelund@theewc.org or youth_nohatespeech@coe.int