

Chapter 8

Reflections on the start of the No Hate Speech Movement

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There were three things we wanted to do: counter the rise of the extreme right, particularly online, where it was becoming good at spreading its messages, recruiting people and intimidating others. Online spaces and discussions were becoming more hateful – which, in turn, was having far-reaching consequences for our societies.

Secondly, we wanted to explore new ways of working with and supporting young people in this regard. It wasn't that the values of the Council of Europe – human rights, democracy and the rule of law – were irrelevant, but rather that some approaches to defending these values seemed outdated, starting with what we viewed as the artificial separation of the online and offline worlds.

Thirdly, we wanted to challenge the view of young people as victims only, and show that one can be both vulnerable and, at the same time, among those best positioned to challenge and change things. We were inspired by the work that youth organisations and networks were already doing to combat hate speech, such as reporting racist websites and training police in recognising neo-Nazi graffiti.

The discussions within the Advisory Council on Youth took place in the broader context of the Council of Europe undergoing a reform process. All Council of Europe sectors were being encouraged to find new ways of doing things, and as part of this process, the youth sector had been asked what its added value was. We were deeply offended and felt generally misunderstood; how could they fail to see the impact of the youth sector?

So we set out to design a project that would support young people in combating hate speech online. We would build capacity to recognise hate speech, racist rhetoric and symbols; to understand the difference between hate speech and freedom of speech; and to be informed about the legislation and mechanisms for reporting hate speech in different countries. We would develop and share tools for online monitoring, reporting and activism; offer peer training; and build a community of activists. We called the project Online Human Rights Defenders.

42. The author was Chair of the Advisory Council on Youth from 2009 to 2011. The 2009-11 mandate of the Advisory Council proposed the No Hate Speech Movement, which was endorsed by the Joint Council on Youth and officially launched by the Council of Europe in 2013.

Up to that point, the Council of Europe had not done much work on hate speech online, despite it being a central threat to human rights, democracy and the rule of law. By working to reclaim the internet as a public space, we believed, the values and work of the Council of Europe could be translated into something tangible in the everyday lives of young people. At the same time, the work of the institution would provide a broader framework and contribute to a feeling of community, with many different actors fighting for the same cause, albeit using different tools.

While we considered the legal nature and definition of hate speech a strength, we were conscious of its limitations, especially given the varying legal frameworks across countries. In a worst-case scenario, our activism would be limited and halted by arguments over what really constitutes hate speech. Ideally, the legal frameworks would provide support and additional artillery for our struggle.

This was particularly important, considering the risks of the project implicitly framing hate speech as a symptom of individual ignorance and lack of education, and denying the ideological nature of many extreme right movements, which could give the impression that the issue could be easily solved by a friendly anti-racist or pedagogical human rights project. While we need to foster and promote dialogue as a transformative tool, hate speech as a phenomenon has political and structural roots, and we need to attack it on those fronts, too.

The backing of an intergovernmental human rights institution such as the Council of Europe was therefore key to the campaign. But that required both the Organisation and its member states to step up their work; not only did we need them to support and protect human rights defenders, we needed them to prevent human rights abuse and violations in the first place. We expected our defence of human rights to be reinforced at the highest political level.

Little did we know then that the governments of some of these member states would actually go on to contribute to a worsening of the human rights situation in Europe, often adopting policies and language that are helping to normalise hate speech online and offline. Sadly, the No Hate Speech Movement has never been needed more than it is today.

NO HATE SPEECH MOVEMENT

A contribution from the Council of Europe

Menno Etemma, No Hate Speech Movement co-ordinator

Since its launch in 2013, the No Hate Speech Movement, the youth campaign for human rights and against hate speech online, has been considered a priority project of the Council of Europe.

With the increasing integration of the internet into our daily lives, the need for our human rights to be ensured online has become evident. The internet gives us new opportunities to enjoy our rights to express our opinions, assemble, form new communities and learn from each other, free from practical burdens such as travel costs

or visa regimes. But it also allows individuals and groups to promote discrimination and intolerance through the expression of hate speech online. Hate speech is not a new human rights issue; but online hate speech has added an extra dimension to the problem, because it takes place day and night and is difficult to monitor, measure and prevent.

The freedom to express ourselves and participate fully and equally in democratic society, in other words to be a full and equal member of European society free from discrimination and fear of violence, are at the core of what the Council of Europe aims to realise for all Europeans. The Organisation therefore works with the governments and civil society organisations of all its member states towards the promotion and protection of human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Europe.

In the first paragraph of Recommendation CM/Rec(2014)6 on a guide to human rights for internet users, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe made clear that the rights and freedoms enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights equally apply to the online space. The 47 member states of the Organisation should therefore ensure that we can fully enjoy our rights to express our opinions, to assembly, to privacy and to use the internet to gain knowledge, free from cybercrime.

Indeed, more and more public services are delivered through online tools, such as paying taxes or applying for social services as well as public debates or consultations. We turn to the internet for news through online papers but social media platforms are also a source of information. Many of these news channels are interactive; the reader can leave comments and contribute to the information exchange. Sadly, all too often we see expressions of hate posted online, targeting individuals and groups just because they are perceived to be different or for having a different opinion.

Hate speech targeting women, for example female journalists or politicians, is a clear example. For this campaign we have termed this sexist hate speech because it targets women not for what they say but simply because they are women and dare to say something. Sexist hate speech aims to humiliate and objectify women, destroy their reputations and push them into silence and submission. Those that are targeted by hate speech often feel threatened and too often stop participating online. Hate speech therefore undermines the right to express oneself and to equality (for example gender equality). The Council of Europe Convention against violence against women and domestic violence, also known as the Istanbul Convention, addresses sexism online and sexist hate speech, recognising it as a form of violence against women. The Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy, too, supports governments and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in addressing sexist hate speech and promotes women in media, among other initiatives. Sexist hate speech is therefore one of the thematic priorities of the No Hate Speech Movement. But hate speech can target anyone. Therefore we also continue to address anti-Semitic hate speech, hate speech targeting refugees and asylum seekers, Islamophobic hate speech, homophobic hate speech and Romaphobic hate speech.

To address hate speech, we need a multi-layered and multi-stakeholder approach. Various sectors of the Council of Europe therefore work together within this campaign to promote awareness, run educational projects and provide support with the

implementation of human rights conventions and treaties. During the last Action Day against Hate Speech Targeting Refugees, on 20 June 2015, we worked with the Special Representative of the Secretary General (of the Council of Europe) on Migration and Refugees and various campaign partners on raising awareness that refugees have the human right to seek asylum from violence and prosecution, and that they also have the right to a fair hearing, treatment and decent accommodation, language support, etc. We also worked with members of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance on an action against political hate speech targeting refugees. Naturally, the arrival of so many new people in a community leads to questions and concerns, so campaign partners organised (educational) activities that promote intercultural communication and building understanding between people across Europe.

As a youth campaign, one of our main focuses is on increasing the knowledge of young people through human rights education about the risks hate speech poses to human rights and democracy, and empower them to reject hate speech and promote human rights online. *Bookmarks*, a manual on combating hate speech through human rights education, supports youth workers, educators and youth leaders to this end. It is part of the long-running Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (EDC/HRE) for all young people in Europe. This programme builds on the publication of *Compass*, a manual for HRE with young people, *Gender Matters*, a manual on addressing gender-based violence affecting young people, and *Mirrors*, a manual on combating anti-Gypsyism through human rights education, to name just a few. All these manuals are used in the campaign's educational activities.

The No Hate Speech Movement is not the first campaign of the youth sector of the Council of Europe against discrimination. In 1995, the first All Different, All Equal campaign was launched, its success being followed by a second one-year campaign in 2006. The experiences, manuals and practices of those campaigns remain relevant as tools to challenge hate speech today.

Of course, our awareness-raising and educational work does not stand by itself. Appropriate youth policies developed with and for youth are essential for success. The youth sector of the Council of Europe aims to encourage co-operation to develop and harmonise youth policy across its member states and set quality criteria for its implementation to provide youth with "equal opportunities and experience that enable them to develop the knowledge, skills and competences to play a full part in all aspects of society" (Agenda 2020, 2008).

The campaign therefore wants all Council of Europe member states to implement the Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education and include education about the human rights of internet users. It is actually not so difficult to do, as integrating the campaign manual *Bookmarks* would be easy and could have potentially big results.

The campaign also supports the implementation of the General Policy Recommendation No. 15 on combating hate speech issued by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) of the Council of Europe. The document provides guidelines to understand what constitutes hate speech, incitement and freedom of

expression. The policy recommendation includes encouraging speedy reactions by public figures to hate speech, withdrawal of support to political parties that actively use hate speech, self-regulation on the part of media, and awareness raising on the dangerous consequences of hate speech.

It is important that more countries sign the additional protocols of the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime, which cover the criminalisation of acts of a racist and xenophobic nature committed through computer systems. In addition, the campaign contributes to the Council of Europe Internet Governance Strategy, which advocates for an open, inclusive, safe and enabling online environment. We believe that young people should be active partners in the decisions taken on the governance of the internet.

So how can young people be involved? While the No Hate Speech Movement is a youth campaign of the Council of Europe, it is composed of national campaigns in over 43 countries across Europe, Morocco, Quebec and Mexico that implement it with over 60 European partners and online activists. The national campaigns are implemented with the active involvement of youth organisations, human rights NGOs and governmental representatives through national campaign committees or campaign support groups. Through this approach the national campaigns can be adapted to national contexts and languages.

Together, we organise educational activities, conferences, youth events, youth camps, street activities and festivals. Offline events in specific countries are listed on the campaign website www.nohatespeechmovement.org or the Facebook pages of national campaigns, listed on www.nohatespeechmovement.org/ncc. Online activities can be found on the campaign site and www.facebook.com/nohatespeech, and the hashtag #nohatespeech is used on Twitter. To summarise:

- ▶ the online campaign platform www.nohatespeechmovement.org is an open space for self-made videos and photo messages from young people of all ages about their personal experiences of hate speech. Users of the platform can subscribe to the newsletter and find out how to take part in the campaign;
- ▶ Hate Speech Watch – www.hatespeechwatch.org – allows users to link in any hate speech content from the internet. Users can tag and comment on the posted messages. Counter-narratives and information on national mechanisms for reporting hate speech are being included;
- ▶ the Campaign in Action Blog – www.nohatespeechmovement.org – allows users to upload information and share activities at national and European level. It provides an overview of what is being done by activists and partners of the campaign.

Human rights and democratic participation online is a concern to us all and we can all be targets of hate speech. Being silent is not an option, because this allows hate speech to be visible and spread.

THE NO HATE SPEECH CAMPAIGN IN HUNGARY

Interview with Ivett Karvalits, campaign co-ordinator for Hungary

Why was the campaign important to launch in your country?

Hatred, incitement to hate, and hate speech against vulnerable groups in society, based on xenophobia, intolerance and prejudice, are some of the most crucial problems of our age, both online and offline. In Hungary, the phenomenon is widespread and has worsened in the past decade due to the consequences of the economic crisis: a high level of unemployment among youngsters, a lack of alternative career paths, poverty, a lack of citizenship education, a democratic deficit and radicalisation, which usually go together with scapegoating towards marginalised groups of society. This has all contributed to a climate of intolerance.

According to the data of a Hungarian youth report published in 2012, the majority of young Hungarians live a significant part of their social life online, in a virtual world that is full of risks, challenges and ambiguous information and messages. One of these risks is (the creation of or sharing of targeted) hateful content, that is hate speech. Cyber-bullying, abuse and verbal violence in the online environment are the most negative consequences of young people's active presence in the social life of the virtual space, which may result in actual physical and psychological harm to individual personalities and the community.

The recent migration crisis has provided an excuse for these voices of hate, and Hungary's leading political parties have legitimised them by their open rejection of refugees along with their oft-voiced narratives about the nation state based on a homogenous culture. Public polls show that the most radical, right-wing political party is the most popular among Hungarian youth, although their political awareness and participation is generally very low. This is to be deplored, but citizenship education and learning about human rights is a grey area in Hungarian public education. Teachers lack training in innovative and effective methods in this area and there is a dearth of resources for appropriate curricula. Moreover, citizenship education is not included in the core curricula as an independent subject, and schools do not prioritise it when selecting extra-curricular activities.

That is why the No Hate Speech Movement in Hungary is important in terms of its objectives regarding human rights education or education for active citizenship. Our aim is to spread a culture of human rights: to sensitise the public, and above all young people, about the importance of human rights online and offline. We try to contribute to the development of an inclusive and respectful youth and school culture; draw attention to the significance of online communities in the life of young people; and raise awareness of the risks and responsibilities related to online actions and expressions. We want to teach young people to become critical, make informed decisions and stand up for the values we all believe in and respect. We also aim to reach out to organisations and professionals who work with young people in formal and non-formal education and involve them in achieving the above-mentioned goals.

Can you give an example of the positive impact of the campaign at local/national level?

Hungary joined the No Hate Speech Movement in March 2013. A campaign committee involving several different youth organisations (including members of the National Youth Council) was set up and has been actively working on sensitising young people about human rights, internet safety and active citizenship by organising events, trainings, online and offline actions and non-formal activities on different issues related to the campaign. These include solidarity with the targets of hate speech, counter-narratives to hate speech, human rights protection, and education for active participation. In the past three years 10 national training sessions were organised in the framework of the campaign, involving more than 150 youth workers and young people, and seven local model projects were developed by youth country-wide, along with a national online democracy competition dedicated to the campaign involving 20 secondary school classes and school communities in relevant activities. We organised a road show to Hungary's top universities, holding lectures and round table discussions to sensitise graduate students about human rights online. The members of the campaign committee engage in international co-operation, and several international youth exchanges/trainings/seminars have been organised. Further, 10 video messages have been produced by the campaign, including a popular song and video clip dedicated to the campaign, and three flash mobs were organised, reaching out to hundreds of young people and the larger public with messages supporting human rights. Some of the model projects gained wider public attention; these included a travelling photo exhibition and random acts of street activism using the methodology of invisible theatre. Young volunteer activists also took the campaign to major summer festivals. Active partners of the campaign include national youth organisations, local youth clubs/centres, local youth-led organisations and NGOs working with human rights education or targeting young people.

In terms of impact, we may assume that young people involved in the implementation of campaign activities and projects have developed their social and organisational competences, and are more actively participating in their local communities. Those who have been targeted/reached by the activities are more responsible for their online and offline actions towards different vulnerable groups in society, and have become aware of the importance of human rights and knowledgeable about the risks and consequences of online hate speech.

What challenges have you faced?

The Hungarian campaign committee was set up by the Ministry of Human Resources and comprises NGOs or youth organisations that depend on funds provided by various donor institutions. From the very beginning, the campaign lacked financial support from the state, so all the work that was carried out by the organisations involved was financed by them from their own resources or from project funding that they obtained, mainly through EU grants or from the Council of Europe. Hungarian NGOs are used to this situation, but this does not help in terms of the predictability, continuity and sustainability of the campaign. In spite of all this many excellent initiatives were implemented, and from 2016 the campaign committee was offered an annual budget by the Youth Department of the Ministry of Human Resources for basic operations.

Another challenge is the sensitiveness of the issues we are talking about, and how to talk to young people about them. When we have tried to involve organisations working with targets of hate, or other organisations with years of experience in the protection of human rights, they have always questioned or doubted the depth and efficacy of such a “youth campaign”. The visuals and messages used and the dominance of “social media” tools in the campaign, which we consider assets when talking about young people as a target group, are sometimes perceived as superficial and banal. Often, in approaching new stakeholders, we have had to convince them about the legitimacy and necessity of our mission and our methods. At the same time, we have also experienced great openness on the part of young people towards our activities and messages, especially the logo of the movement, which is increasingly recognised in Hungary.

THE NO HATE SPEECH CAMPAIGN IN BELGIUM

Interview with Manu Mainil, campaign co-ordinator for Belgium

Why was it important to launch the campaign in your country?

Whether in French-speaking Belgium or elsewhere, our multiple identities are constantly developing in the virtual sphere. This virtual sphere is an integral part of the real world and our internet connection follows us like a shadow wherever we go. Young people are all the more likely to act through imitation and to replicate the behaviour they see there. Several surveys confirm that they come across online hate speech on a daily basis (in the form of images, text, videos, etc.) and they do not necessarily know how to react or who to turn to for help.

This is why we felt it was essential to launch the campaign in Belgium in order to assist young people in learning about active, critical, creative and supportive cyber-citizenship, and to provide their adult role models (educators, parents, teachers, etc.) with educational resources to enable them to organise awareness-raising activities on their own, ensuring a climate of trust and respect.

Since March 2013, our platform of associations and activists has been undertaking substantive work developing tools (illustrations, games, videos, etc.) and has organised multiple activities (citizen-based action, events, exhibitions, training courses, seminars, etc.).

Can you give an example of the campaign’s positive impact at local/national level?

The No Hate Speech Campaign has enabled us to build up a vast network of players willing to take firm action to ensure human rights are upheld online.

Since November 2015, spurred on by the International Youth Office that now coordinates the campaign, this networking has expanded significantly and become much more diversified. This has given us a better picture of what is happening on the ground, providing us with a solid foundation on which to establish intersectoral partnerships and a much higher profile.

There are now 350 members on our platform of associations and activists, which functions as a testing ground, making it possible to express one's needs, share good practices, compile documentation, take advantage of training and practical tools, and take joint action for certain events.

What challenges have you faced?

Without a doubt, the main challenge has been the constantly changing nature of the digital environment. The multiplication of platforms and applications means that we constantly need to be up to date in a vast variety of contexts, including security settings and confidentiality, the way users interact, and reporting mechanisms.

This has an impact on how those helping young people approach the online hate problem: initially, there is a tendency to feel uncomfortable with the new technologies that are constantly evolving. So it is imperative for our awareness-raising activities to address this and provide means of discussing, without any inhibition, the way young people use their computers and smartphones. We feel that it is vital for us to offer them an opportunity to speak out and discuss topics that can at times be sensitive, taking a necessarily objective approach and being fully aware that everything happening in the virtual world has consequences for everyone as individuals. These may have negative or even dramatic consequences, but it is never too late to reverse the trend and use the internet, which is a formidable tool, to combat all forms of discrimination!

THE NO HATE SPEECH CAMPAIGN IN IRELAND

Interview with Anne Walsh, campaign co-ordinator for Ireland

Why was the campaign important to launch in your country?

The National Youth Council launched the No Hate Speech Movement in Ireland in response to a call from the campaign team in the Council of Europe. My first thought was that we don't have a lot of hate speech in Ireland compared to other countries in Europe since we are lucky not to have a far right political wing. But scratch the surface and hate speech is as prevalent in Ireland as elsewhere. It is especially noticeable in relation to Travellers, our indigenous, traditionally nomadic fellow citizens, who are openly discriminated against. (In Europe, Irish Travellers are described under the broader term of Gypsy.) We have also seen a significant increase in Islamophobia and of course there is the endemic issue of sexist hate speech.

When we first got involved in the campaign Ireland was preparing to vote on legislating for same-sex marriage and we wanted to counter the hate speech that was bound to erupt. Having learned lessons from that campaign we anticipate that the next trigger for increased hate speech will be a proposed referendum to repeal the ban on abortion in Ireland. It is a contentious issue and will be hurtful for many. The No Hate Speech Movement will be fighting to make sure it is carried out with respect from both sides.

We are also fighting to have hate crime legislation put in place. We are one of only two countries in Europe without hate crime legislation. We don't believe that hate speech can be legislated against as it is so hard to define but this further necessitates a strong campaign against hate speech at community level.

Can you give an example of the positive impact of the campaign at local/national level?

Despite having no core funds and a very small team of Youth Ambassadors we see that we are making a difference. People know we exist, they know there is a bystander who cares and who acts. By taking action as role models and observing trends we see more and more people standing in solidarity against hate mongers; there are more online posts supporting victims and standing up against hate speech. The culture online is shifting to one where people aren't afraid to call out discrimination when they see it.

We have had politicians apologise for offensive comments and some have been removed from their parties or barred from standing for election. Twitter have engaged with us really well, as have Facebook.

At local level we see youth groups carry out activities such as flash mobs that directly reduce hate speech and prejudicial language that would have been present in the groups before their involvement in the campaign. Other groups have made videos that send out a strong message on the importance of solidarity and in standing up for others. Young people tell us that they now stop themselves from writing hateful stuff online when they are angry, finding more constructive ways to disagree with people.

In the framework of our campaign in Ireland, we have trained Youth Ambassadors who run a social media rota on our own No Hate Speech Movement Facebook and Twitter platforms. Mainly, they post counter-narratives to keep positive anti-discrimination messages alive and active. They also give presentations to schools, youth groups and colleges.

What challenges have you faced?

There are many challenges in running the No Hate Speech Movement campaign in Ireland. We have no core money so there is no full-time or even part-time co-ordinator for the campaign. All of our Youth Ambassadors are busy with college, school or work so their time is limited. This reduces the impact that we could be having. We rely a lot on being involved in European-wide projects to upskill our Youth Ambassador team.

It is a difficult campaign to run – who wants to ask young people to search for hate speech? We are lucky that some members of our National Campaign Committee take on some of this task, taking screenshots, alerting us to incidents, and keeping a note of repeat offenders. Also, as an online campaign, it operates largely in the same organic space that online communication happens, a space that is hard to manipulate and make inroads into as non-professional volunteers. As humans we tend to gravitate towards like-minded people so our online circle of influence usually comprises people of a similar mind frame. Reaching out beyond those circles means

making more visits to youth groups, schools and colleges. However, it takes time and money to build this capacity. We have a great vision for the campaign in Ireland – in particular we want to work more with Northern Ireland, but we are still looking for a key partner there. Nevertheless, with very little we have made an impression far larger than we ever thought possible.

THE NO HATE SPEECH CAMPAIGN IN SERBIA

Setting the proper foundations as a precondition for campaign sustainability

Aleksandra Knežević, campaign co-ordinator for Serbia

We embraced the idea of launching a campaign that would combat hate speech and other negative phenomena in the online community as soon as it appeared at the European level, seeing in it the proper instrument for introducing the topic in our national and local realities. We were looking at research that told us that young people in Serbia were spending up to 15 hours per day online, and were not properly informed and educated about cyberspace: that was the trigger for us to join the campaign as soon as it was officially launched.

We saw in it a two-fold purpose: to teach young people that negative behaviour on the internet has the same weight and consequences as in the real world, seriously affecting young people's lives; and to show them how useful a place the internet can actually be, for the access it provides to information important for their education, mobility, activism and leisure time. Simply put, the campaign message is: do not use cyberspace to vent your anger and frustration on other people behind a mask of anonymity; if you are there, work on yourself and improve your knowledge, expand your horizons, and make new contacts. We decided, on the basis of a situation analysis at the national level, to follow two tracks – combating negativity and confronting it with all the positivity of the internet.

Much time was dedicated to setting the proper foundations. We followed guidelines to form a multisectoral working body that would work according to the principle of co-management, aiming to have everybody's voice heard and everybody's ideas included; we educated and trained different stakeholders (for example teachers, journalists, NGOs, students), counting on the effect of multiplication for their further engagement within the campaign; we encouraged specific local activities, both offline and online, fully believing that each of our partners responded to needs and priorities in their own context; and we pushed inclusion of topics addressing hate speech in strategic acts at the local level, knowing that a proper strategic framework would contribute to the durability of such topics on the local agenda. Laying such foundations proved to be extremely important for the sustainability of the campaign at a later stage, when the first challenges appeared.

At the same time, we used different communication channels and instruments to approach our main target group and put the issues of cyber-security and combating hate speech on the internet on the agenda of local and national actors. We knew that we could not separate educational aspects from the promotional component and

we tried to put the same focus on the content as well as on visibility. The imperative was to reach as many people as possible in a way that presented the campaign as something useful, understandable and accessible. We wanted to bring the ideas and goals of the campaign closer to citizens, so we needed to use channels that would reach ordinary people. Our greatest success was achieved through sport, and though a superficial glance might have led one to question the link between sport and combating hate speech online, the public was receptive to the ideas presented. After all sport is an important communication channel for the dissemination of information and the promotion of positive social values. Seeing their favourite players wearing T-shirts with strong messages against hate speech (first online, then in both the real and virtual worlds), influenced many members of the public to pay attention to other activities we were implementing. Famous sports personalities were engaged with the campaign, and they promoted messages about the proper use of the internet, including the risks and negative consequences of online expressions of aggression or violence towards different groups on social networks. Given our national passion for sports, these messages were heard by the Serbian public.

These positive experiences in relation to the campaign at the national level drew on activities taking place at the local level, including sessions to disseminate information and knowledge and build capacity: over 80 municipalities implemented their own activities addressing hate speech. Investing in people was the best part of the campaign, because it helped it stay relevant and active once the first challenges appeared on the national level. In Serbia, this took place when the institution in charge of implementation changed its focus and removed the campaign from its priorities. Losing the benefit of clear guidance and co-ordination was fortunately only a short-term problem – local structures soon started to organise themselves on their own, providing the resources from local governments, as well as from other national and international donors. This was the best proof that the foundations of the No Hate Speech Movement had been laid properly, in a way to protect the campaign's sustainability no matter what.