(Re)Act for equal opportunities online and offline

Report of the study session held by UNITED for Intercultural Action

in co-operation with the European Youth Centre of the Council of Europe

European Youth Centre Strasbourg
6-13 April 2015

This report gives an account of various aspects of the study session. It has been produced by and is the responsibility of the educational team of the study session. It does not represent the official point of view of the Council of Europe.
(Re)Act for equal opportunities online and offline

Report of the study session held by
UNITED for Intercultural Action

in co-operation with the
European Youth Centre of the Council of Europe

European Youth Centre Strasbourg
6th-13th April 2015

Acknowledgements:
Centre for Intercultural Dialogue (MK)
Associazione Trepuntzer (I)
Movimiento Contra la Intolerancia (E)
UNITED for Intercultural Action

Reporter:
Jonathan Karstadt (jono04@gmail.com)

UNITED for Intercultural Action
Postbus 413 – NL-1000 AK Amsterdam – The Netherlands
tel: +31-20-6834778 fax: +31-20-6834582
E-mail: info@unitedagainstracism.org
website: www.unitedagainstracism.org
# Table of Contents:

Executive Summary........................................................................................................5
Introduction .......................................................................................................................6
  Aims and Objectives ....................................................................................................6
  Participant Profile ......................................................................................................6
  Key Issues and Background ........................................................................................7
Programme – Inputs and Discussions ...........................................................................9
  Overview ...................................................................................................................9
  Danger of Words .......................................................................................................9
  Experiencing the Topics ...........................................................................................11
  Human Rights Case Studies ......................................................................................12
  Visit to the *Palais de l’Europe* ................................................................................15
  Online Racism and Discrimination ..........................................................................17
  Tools for Human Rights Education ...........................................................................19
  Online Activism .........................................................................................................20
  Tools and Strategies for Online Campaigning ...........................................................22
  Action Day Campaign Plans ....................................................................................23
    International Human Rights Day ..........................................................................23
    International Day Against Fascism and Antisemitism ............................................24
    International Refugee Day .....................................................................................25
    International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia .................25
Main Outcomes ............................................................................................................27
Learning Points for Participants ..................................................................................27
Outcomes for UNITED .................................................................................................27
Recommendations for the Council of Europe ...............................................................28
Follow-up Activities .....................................................................................................29
Appendices ....................................................................................................................30
  Appendix I: Final Programme ..................................................................................30
  Appendix II: List of Participating Organisations .......................................................31
  Appendix III: List of References ..............................................................................32
  Appendix IV: List of Online Links ............................................................................33
  Appendix V: UNITED Campaign Materials .............................................................34
With thanks to ................................................................................................................35
We are UNITED .............................................................................................................36
Executive Summary

The study session (Re)Act for equal opportunities online and offline was held at the European Youth Centre of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg from 6 to 13 April 2015. The session aimed to train 35 young NGO representatives, willing to discuss, experience and participate in sessions on how to deal with discrimination and racism online, using the positive approach of human rights and non-formal education. It aimed to motivate and enable them to step in when they witness situations where racism, discrimination and hate speech are spread online. They would further be equipped with new tools and techniques for effective online and offline campaigning. The study session also aimed to link with the lessons learned from the project “No Hate Speech: Young People Combating Hate Speech Online” of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe.

The study session began with a brief introduction to the Council of Europe, and an overview of its structure and key organs, followed by informal icebreaking and teambuilding exercises. The content sessions began by encouraging participants to think critically about the concepts of racism, discrimination, hate speech and hate crime, as well as human rights and human rights education. The session continued by looking at the European Convention on Human Rights and the European Court of Human Rights, and exploring the effectiveness of the application of human rights law as a method of countering hate speech and discrimination. A visit to the Palais de l’Europe introduced participants to other organs of the Council of Europe engaged in antiracist work. Participants further explored methods for dealing with hate speech, hate crime and discrimination by looking at non-formal human rights education methods, and learning about modern campaigning methods and a number of useful tools for effective online campaigns, as well as online privacy and security tools for human rights campaigners. The study session concluded with participants planning their own campaigns to mark a number of key action days.

Following the study session, participants will continue to develop and implement their plans for campaigns to mark the action days: International Human Rights Day, International Day Against Fascism and Antisemitism, International Refugee Day, and International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia, utilising the new skills and network of contacts that they gained during the study session.

As a result of the study session, participants now have a much better understanding of how to deal with online and offline hate speech and discrimination using the positive methods of human rights education and online activism. They have already begun to demonstrate their abilities with the new tools they have learned through the campaigns they are planning with the support of the UNITED network. In their feedback on the study session, the aspects mentioned most by participants as key learning points were the tools and strategies for effective online campaigning, as well as information about Internet security, and tools to improve security and maximise anonymity online. Furthermore, participants felt they had gained knowledge on the importance and relevance of human rights education in the context of combating hate speech, hate crime and discrimination, as well as information on the tools and resources they could use for human rights education with young people.
Introduction

Aims and Objectives

The study session (Re)Act for equal opportunities online and offline was held at the European Youth Centre of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg from 6 to 13 April 2015. The session aimed to train 35 young NGO representatives, willing to discuss, experience and participate in sessions on how to deal with discrimination and racism online, using the positive approach of human rights and non-formal education. It aimed to motivate and enable them to step in when they witness situations where racism, discrimination and hate speech are spread online. They would further be equipped with new tools and techniques for effective online and offline campaigning.

“Hate speech” is defined by the Council of Europe as covering all forms of expression which spread, incite, promote or justify racial hatred, xenophobia, antisemitism or other forms of hatred based on intolerance, including: intolerance expressed by aggressive nationalism and ethnocentrism, discrimination and hostility against minorities, migrants and people of immigrant origin.

It was planned that after the study session, participants would:

- have shared experiences and good practices of youth work in the online area related to human rights education and access to social rights;
- have further developed tools for action against discrimination in social media and have explored the risks of media spins which trigger actions in the offline space;
- know how to recognise situations where racism, discrimination and hate speech are expressed online;
- be equipped with a range of tools and be able to apply them to react to racism, discrimination and hate speech online.

The study session was to take an interactive approach, so participants would be encouraged to contribute their own experiences, expertise and ideas, bring along examples and good practices from their own countries and fields, and debate the use of possible interventions. The programme was to include: sharing experiences, examining case studies, identifying trends relating to racism in Europe, visiting relevant Council of Europe institutions, an overview of mechanisms to combat hate speech online, learning how to apply and use tools, and formulating concrete action plans for follow up.

Facilitators would use a combination of non-formal peer-to-peer learning, simulations, group discussions, exercises, debates and expert presentations to engage participants with the key issues. The study session also aimed to link with the lessons learned from the project “No Hate Speech: Young People Combating Hate Speech Online” of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe. Non-formal education techniques were a core aspect of the study session’s methodology, reflecting their importance in the educational philosophy of the Council of Europe.

Participant Profile

The profile of participants was highly diverse. Participants came from different backgrounds, with a vast range of different experiences, origins, professions, and roles.
in their respective organisations. Overall, 21 different countries of residence were represented.

The original call for participants specified that the preferred profile of participants was young people who were active in antiracism, antifascism, refugee, human rights and minority rights organisations and grassroots activism. These may include, for example;

- Leaders and representatives of youth organisations or groups working against racism, discrimination, hate speech and in online environments
- Representatives of national and international organisations active for human rights
- Youth workers and education professionals working against hate speech, racism, for human rights and with online technologies
- Bloggers and online human rights activists.

Priority would be given to nominations from young delegates (under 30 years old) who are able to demonstrate a genuine concern about hate speech (online) and interest in taking action after the study session.

There were approximately 150 participant nominations that met the intended profile. UNITED always tries to find good balance in gender, geography and backgrounds of participants at conferences and study sessions. The balance in geography and background was certainly met in the final participant list. At first, there was also a good participant selection in terms of gender balance, but due to cancellations coming primarily from men, the final gender balance changed a bit, and in the end the participant list was fairly female-heavy. This did not, however, influence the variety and range of experience and viewpoints represented.

**Key Issues and Background**

The key issues of the study session were the problems of racism, discrimination, hate speech and hate crime, and strategies for dealing with these problems using the positive approach of human rights education and both online and offline campaigning. Within this framework, there were also in-depth discussions on human rights law and its application in the context of the Council of Europe.

The study session was organised against the background of the Council of Europe Youth Department’s “No Hate Speech: Young People Combating Hate Speech Online” campaign. This project aims to combat online hate speech by working with young people and youth organisations to help them recognise and act against such human rights violations. Within this project, the Youth Department runs the “No Hate Speech Movement” campaign, whose main aim is to reduce hate speech and at combat racism and discrimination in their online expression. The campaign did not aim to limit freedom of expression, nor to encourage everyone to be “nice” online – rather it was against hate speech in all its forms. The campaign focused on human rights education, youth participation and media literacy. UNITED and its representatives at the Council of Europe played a key role at every stage of the campaign.

The “No Hate Speech Movement” campaign was linked with the study session in several ways; the facilitators had all been involved in the campaign in some capacity, and a number of participants were selected on the basis of their experience as “No Hate Speech Movement” campaigners. Participants were given an introduction to the
campaign, and a part of the study session was dedicated to looking at its methodology and what lessons could be learned from its experiences. The outcomes of this study session should play an important role in contributing to the Youth Department’s follow-up to the campaign.
Programme – Inputs and Discussions

Overview
Following a brief introduction to Council of Europe, and an overview of its structure and key organs, the flow of the study session began with informal icebreaking and team building exercises, helping to instil in the group an appropriate attitude for the collaborative work that was to come. The session moved on to analysis of the key issues and their background, and participants were subsequently given knowledge about the Council of Europe and the role of its various organs in protecting human rights and combatting racism, discrimination, hate speech and hate crime. Finally, participants were equipped with the skills to act as young activists and were encouraged to develop their own ideas for campaigns.

The opening content sessions encouraged participants to think critically about the concepts of racism, discrimination, hate speech and hate crime, as well as human rights and human rights education. The session continued by looking at the European Convention on Human Rights and the European Court of Human Rights, and exploring the effectiveness of the application of human rights law as a method of countering hate speech and discrimination. A visit to the Palais de l’Europe introduced participants to other organs of the Council of Europe engaged in antiracist work. Participants further explored methods for dealing with hate speech, hate crime and discrimination by looking at methods for informal human rights education, and learning about modern campaigning methods and a number of useful tools for effective online campaigns, as well as online privacy and security tools for human rights campaigners. The study session concluded with participants planning their own campaigns to mark a number of key action days.

Danger of Words
The first key content session was the Danger of Words. This gave participants the opportunity to discuss the meaning and implications of words that they would be using a lot in the following days. The six key words discussed were: hate speech, hate crime, discrimination, racism, human rights and human rights education. Participants wrote down their impressions of these words on large sheets of paper before presenting their ideas in a creative way.

Most participants were in agreement that the word racism refers to discriminatory and prejudiced actions and views against a person or people due to their ethnic background or genetic heritage. Racism can take many forms: it can be visible or invisible, physical or verbal, and can have a variety of effects on individuals and society. A common theme of discussion was the reasons for which people hold racist views. Some of the reasons identified were ignorance, the perceived need for a scapegoat, and, in many countries, the history and lingering effects of colonialism. Many participants also commented on the fact that "races" are concepts constructed by people, with little scientific evidence to support their existence; as the presenting group summed it up: "We are all human."

The discussion on the word discrimination mainly focused on the many types of discrimination that exist. People discriminate on the grounds of ethnicity, gender, nationality, sexual orientation and a whole host of other factors. One very interesting
discussion that arose on this word was the concept of "positive discrimination". Should minorities or groups that have traditionally been subjugated against be given special treatment in order to give them better representation in society? An example of this is quotas for female MPs in many national parliaments. Many participants felt that even this form of discrimination should be avoided, and that it is a very superficial solution; it was generally agreed that a better cure for inequality in society was an increased focus on education, and on creating conditions where jobs and public offices are truly inclusive and open to all.

As with discrimination, participants identified a large number of factors and identities for which people become the victims of hate speech. Participants were quick to point out that hate "speech" is often not spoken at all - much of it takes place online, in newspapers and over social media. Hate speech is often given prestige if it is spread by people in positions of authority: politicians, journalists, TV stars etc. - as well as if it manages to "trend" or "go viral" online. Hate speech was one of the key themes of the conference, and participants would go on to hear more about its manifestations from Christiane Schneider of Jugendschutz.net, as well as studying the issue in the context of the Council of Europe’s “No Hate Speech Movement” campaign, and learning about how to deal with it through use of online campaigning tools and human rights education.

Participants drew a link between hate speech and hate crime, and talked about what the differences and connections were between these two terms. Many agreed that hate crime is often a direct or indirect result of hate speech, but that it differs in that it is violent, and often (though not always) expressed physically. Hate crime can be organised or spontaneous, and can take many different manifestations, including physical attacks, war crimes, cybercrime, genocide and eugenics. Hate crime was another recurring theme in the study session: prevention and raising awareness of hate crime was one of the key objectives of the campaigns that participants would go on to plan.

In the context of the study session, enforcement of human rights and delivery of human rights education were presented as positive methods for tackling the negative phenomena of racism, discrimination, hate crime and hate speech. When discussing what exactly we mean when we talk about human rights, participants were in agreement that this term generally refers to the rights given to every human being according to various statutes and international agreements such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights.

There was, however, some disagreement about how much these rights represent “natural rights” and how much influence human history and culture has had on their development. Discussion turned to the origins of modern ideas concerning human rights, with some participants pointing to the traumatic experience of WWII as a key factor. Some participants raised the issue of the potential negative impact of human rights law, such as the flow of wealth from developing countries to developed countries as a result of the imposition of human rights and western democratic values. One participant felt that less focus should be given to human rights as a legal framework, and more attention to ethics, as the philosophical basis for human rights. The general consensus, though, was that human rights should always be acknowledged.

And what are the key issues to consider when thinking about human rights education? One thing that participants discussed was which target-groups such education should
focus on; school children were one such group identified, while many participants also felt that police officers should be given much more comprehensive human rights training. It was pointed out that human rights education is itself a human right, stemming from the inalienable nature of human rights.

One participant felt strongly that wherever human rights education is delivered, the rights themselves should always be implemented on the ground, giving the example of his native Bosnia, where human rights education is delivered in schools that are themselves ethnically segregated – thus, in his opinion, negating any positive effects that the human rights education could have. Participants also talked about the kinds of activities that were effective in human rights education, and important tools such as the Council of Europe's COMPASS manual. Throughout the week, they would go on to learn about more tools for human rights education and strategies they could use.

**Experiencing the Topics**

To explore more deeply the topics of racism, discrimination, hate speech and hate crime, participants took part in a simulation exercise taken from the COMPASS manual for human rights education: *Take a Step Forward*. In this activity, participants had to pick at random a piece of paper with a short piece of text describing a role. The roles varied from a refugee from Afghanistan or a seventeen-year-old Roma girl to a farmer in a remote village in the mountains or the son of a wealthy banker. They then had to put themselves in the shoes of that role in order to answer a number of questions.

Through this exercise, participants saw how differing circumstances can lead to very different outcomes in life. Participants then discussed where they got their ideas and preconceptions about the roles from. The descriptions of the role were very vague, and to answer many of the questions extra information was required, so participants also discussed how they filled in the gaps in information about their roles. These gaps included factors such as location: one participant whose role was that of a wheelchair-bound young man told the group that his answers to questions in the exercise would be very different for a resident of his native Cameroon than where he is now living in France. Participants also realised areas lacking in their own knowledge, such as one participant whose role was that of the son of a Chinese immigrant, who admitted that she knew little about the discrimination faced by people of Chinese origin in her country.

The discussion went on to topics such as the difference between stereotypes and prejudice, and what could be done to minimise the disadvantages experienced by members of marginalised groups in society.

In the next part of the session, participants talked about different forms of discrimination and their various manifestations in both the online and offline space, stimulated by a set of given questions. One of the topics that was up for discussion was the different types of racist/discriminatory behaviour, and the reasons for which people decide to engage in such behaviours. Different types of racism included visible and invisible racism, as well as conscious and unconscious. One participant shared an online video with the group, in which the British rapper, poet and journalist Akala speaks about his experience of everyday racism.

Reasons for racist and discriminatory behaviour identified by participants included ignorance and lack of awareness around issues such as migration and ethnic minorities: one example given was a person of immigrant background being told to
“go home” even if they themselves were born in their country of residence. Another reason was the perceived negative economic effects of migration in developed countries: an example that participants gave on this topic was the media furore over prospective migrants from Romania and Bulgaria to the UK after border controls were lifted on these countries at the beginning of 2014.

The lingering effects of colonialism were also identified by many participants as a driver of racist attitudes. An example given to illustrate this point was the character of Zwarte Piet in the Netherlands (the companion to Sinterklaas, a popular figure in Dutch culture) who clearly resembles a caricature of an African slave from the Renaissance era. This was also given as an example of how people are often not aware of certain racist aspects of their society: many Dutch people do not consider Zwarte Piet, a much-loved character from their childhoods, to be a racist figure, but when he is displayed on the streets of London (as takes place in a scene from the 2014 documentary film Our Colonial Hangover), people have very different, hostile reactions.

Participants also talked about discrimination they themselves had experienced; several participants were members of ethnic minority groups in their home countries, and described instances of racial discrimination they had faced, while other participants had faced discrimination on the grounds of their sexual orientation or gender identity. One participant was quick to point out the discrimination faced by women in society, suggesting that all the women present had suffered discrimination at some point in their lives, even if they had not considered it as such at the time.

Another discussion centred on the different roles involved in a discriminatory act. Participants identified three key parties in such an act: the victim, the perpetrator, and the bystander. The role of the bystander was one which was subject of much discussion: is this a purely passive role, or can it be an active one too? Participants generally agreed that bystanders had a duty to intervene when witnessing an act of discrimination, but conceded that this could be difficult in instances where the perpetrators are physically intimidating.

An important part of this discussion also focused on the difference between online and offline discrimination, and the difference between people’s online and offline personae. Participants argued that people tend not to think so much about the effects of their actions online, as anonymity and physical distance from the target of their actions leads to less risk. Some participants argued that this could be a positive thing, as it gave people the opportunity to express themselves and not be judged, and that it is better to use the Internet as an outlet to air ideals even if they are negative, though others suggested that purveyors of such views were often reluctant to continue discussions in the offline space.

**Human Rights Case Studies**

Having explored the topics of discrimination, racism and hate speech in detail, participants’ attention was turned to the Council of Europe and its role in dealing with these issues, specifically through the enforcement of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). One of the study session participants with in-depth knowledge of European human rights law, gave a presentation on the history and structure of both the ECHR and the European Court of Human Rights (EChHR). The ECHR includes a number of articles that protect individuals from discrimination,
particularly Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination), Article 9 (freedom of thought, conscience and religion), and Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life).

Participants looked at five case studies of incidents where individuals had complained of human rights infringements. At first, participants were given brief descriptions of the cases that were lacking in detail, and asked to discuss them taking into account a number of key questions, such as who the key actors were in the case, whether there was a clearly identifiable victim and/or perpetrator, where the conflicts lay between the rights of the actors lay, and whether racism, hate speech or other kinds of discrimination were present. Each of the case studies was based on a real case that had been brought before the ECtHR in Strasbourg, and once participants had discussed each of the cases based on the brief descriptions, they were given further information about the cases and the decision of the court, which led to further discussion.

Case 1 was the case of Vereinigung Bildender Künstler vs. Austria. In this case, a Vienna court had imposed a perpetual injunction banning a painting that depicted an Austrian politician performing a sexual act. The artists’ association appealed to the ECtHR, arguing that the decision was a violation of Article 10 (freedom of expression) of the ECHR. The court overturned the injunction, noting that the painting is clearly satirical, as well as the fact that there was no geographical or temporal limit set on the Austrian courts’ decision. Participants generally agreed with the ECtHR’s decision in this case, arguing that the right of the politician not to be offended was outweighed by the fundamental right of artists to express their opinions freely in their work.

Case 2 was that of Jersild vs. Denmark, in which a radio journalist appealed to the ECtHR regarding his conviction in Denmark for aiding and abetting the dissemination of racist statements, after the broadcast of an interview in which his interviewees made many derogatory statements about black people. The ECtHR ruled in favour of the journalist, stating that news reporting based on interviews is a fundamental role of media, and that, taken in context, the views of the interviewees could not be mistaken for views that the journalist was trying to promote. Once again, participants were generally in agreement with the court’s decision, agreeing that freedom of the press was a fundamental part of a functional democracy. Participants did, however, identify a conflict in the case between the right to freedom of expression (Article 10 of the ECHR) and the freedom against discrimination (Article 14). Some participants held the view that the journalist could only be cleared of allegations of discrimination if he made a clear rebuke of the interviewees’ views as part of the broadcast.

Case 3 (Kosteski vs “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”) concerned an employee who was fined after taking holiday without permission to celebrate a religious festival. The employee maintained that this was both discriminatory (thus violating Article 14 of the ECHR) and violated his right to religious freedom (Article 9). The ECtHR ruled that the fine was not a human rights violation, as the employee could not provide sufficient evidence that he was religious, and that it was not discriminatory, as there was no evidence that an adherent of a different religion would have been treated more favourably. Participants’ discussion about this case covered a number of different areas. Some participants suggested that such a matter would never result in a fine at their own organisations, but conceded that the issue of religious festivals was taken more seriously by NGOs than in other sectors. It was suggested that there was potentially a conflict between the rights of the employee and the
employer, as the regulations around holidays had probably been set out in the employment contract, and any unauthorised holidays taken by the employee could have negative financial effects for the employer, regardless of the religious reason for the holiday. After hearing the ECtHR’s judgement, many participants questioned how a court or government could objectively test a person’s religious affiliation or beliefs – and asked why the individual was required to prove his religious devotion in the first place.

Case 4 was the case of S.A.S. vs. France, a case where a 23 year-old French citizen challenged the country's controversial law that banned the wearing of facial veils in all public places. The ECHR decided to uphold the ban, arguing that the law was a proportional defence of the French ideal of “living together” with shared, secular values. Participants expressed diverse views on this case. One participant said that they thought it was clear that this law was not a case of discrimination, as the law applies to all, regardless of their gender or religious identity. Other participants disagreed, arguing that the ban was clearly aimed against Muslim women, as well as the fact that the ban infringed upon the rights of all people to wear what they choose - which includes clothing that covers their faces. It was also argued that the law protected women from being forced to wear religious garments, and that it reduced the barriers to intercultural communication in public spaces - but this was countered with the assertion that the ban is against people's right to religious freedom, an assertion that was rejected by the ECtHR.

Case 5 was that of Gas and Dubois vs. France. In this case, a woman was not allowed to adopt the daughter of her same-sex partner, with whom she had been cohabiting for over ten years and with whom she had recently entered into a civil partnership. The French authorities refused to sanction the adoption on the grounds that the couple were not married, which was a prerequisite for adoption according to French law. The couple argued that the state’s refusal was discriminatory (Article 14 of the ECHR), and violated their right to private and family life (Article 8); however, the ECtHR upheld the French authorities’ decision, ruling that it was not discriminatory as marriage was also a legal requirement for adoption by heterosexual couples. Many participants were adamant that this decision represented institutional discrimination against LGBT people, as there was no legal method for the couple to achieve equal legal status (marriage) to a heterosexual couple in France at that time. Some participants suggested that this was in itself a violation of the couple’s right to marry, and that the erstwhile ban on same-sex marriage in France was discriminatory (the right to marry is stipulated in Article 12 of the ECHR, although at present this right is only extended to heterosexual couples).

When giving feedback on this activity, participants acknowledged that it was good to look at and discuss the cases based on brief, undetailed descriptions before hearing the specifics, as it stimulated deeper discussion and consideration of different variables that affect the case and its implications for human rights law. The cases chosen were apt illustrations of the various conflicts that can arise in human rights cases, and of the limits of human rights law in combatting racism, discrimination and hate speech.
Visit to the *Palais de l’Europe*

The work of the Council of Europe in tackling discrimination, racism and hate speech is not limited to the enforcement of human rights law, and participants were able to learn more about the other organs employed by the Council for this purpose during a visit to the *Palais de l’Europe*. The participants heard presentations from representatives of three Council of Europe organs, and were then able to pose questions to them in the context of a panel discussion.

The first speaker was Stefano Valenti of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), a monitoring body that makes recommendations to governments on how to improve the situation in their countries concerning the problems of racism and discrimination. Formed of representatives from each of the Council of Europe’s 47 member states, it produces its work in the form of a monitoring report on each member state every 4 years, as well as general policy recommendations for recurring problems across the continent – including an upcoming one on hate speech. ECRI also monitors integration of migrants and the problem of multiple discrimination. Valenti concluded his speech by pointing to the positive economic contribution made by “migrant entrepreneurs” and suggested that further progress in the field of antiracism and migrant rights would be made by focusing the public’s attention on such positive contributions to society by migrants and minorities.

The next speaker was Elise Cornu, head of the secretariat for the Committee on Equality and Non-discrimination. This committee is formed of 84 members of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe; until 2012 it was only concerned with gender equality, but its remit was then expanded to include the rights of women, LGBT rights, and racism. The committee produces reports, with Cornu giving the examples of its previous report on institutional racism in police forces, and an upcoming report on “neo-racism” (the name of which, she said, the committee is considering changing to “cultural racism”). The committee also set up the No Hate Alliance, a 38-member group of PACE members who take an open stance against manifestations of hate, giving them a forum to share best practices.

The third and final speaker was Christina Baglai of the Intercultural Cities Programme. This is a network of cities that participates in an index, in which the cities are ranked according to their levels of tolerance towards migrants and minorities. It also runs positive information campaigns, which have in the past had a demonstrable effect on levels of positive acceptance of migrants and minorities among residents. The programme focuses on working at city level, where most powers are concentrated. Baglai also talked about the programme’s Communication for Integration (C4i) project, inspired by Barcelona City Council’s 2010 “Anti-Rumours” campaign.

As it was already known to many of the participants as a key organ of the Council of Europe in its work against racism and discrimination, many of the questions posed by participants during the panel discussion focused on ECRI. Firstly, one participant took issue with Stefano Valenti’s definition of migrants by their “entrepreneurship”, suggesting that this view was too reductionist and not representative of all migrants. Valenti responded by reiterating that he wanted to focus on the often-neglected positive economic contribution made by migrants, especially in countries, such as his native Italy, with low birth rates and aging native populations.
Further questions from participants concerned the impact of ECRI reports: how do countries react to negative criticism? Other participants also asked how ECRI could remain impartial and objective in its reporting when its members are appointed by governments. Valenti answered that ECRI was there to recommend, not to condemn; ECRI reports can be used by national governments as part of policy reviews, and can also be used by NGOs for their advocacy work. In answer to the question over the impartiality of ECRI, he pointed to the statutes of the commission, which specify that, while members are government-appointed, they are not representatives of their national governments, and have a duty to remain objective and non-partisan.

Valenti also pointed to the statutes in answering the question of how NGOs can get involved in the work of ECRI. According to statutes, NGOs can “seize directly” ECRI on “any questions covered by its terms of reference.” He also said that ECRI has constant communication with NGOs relevant to its work in all member states, and holds regular meetings with them in preparation for its reports.

A question aimed at Elise Cornu asked what she thought was the biggest challenge faced by the No Hate Alliance. Cornu responded that one of the key challenges lay in the definition of hate speech, and the occasional difficulty of translating the concept into all European languages. She also pointed to the different strategies to combat hate speech, which include legal remedies, as well as cultural actions and counter-speech, and disagreements over which method was most effective. This difficulty in coming to a consensus that suits all member states was also present in the committee’s on-going work on “cultural racism”, with some states reluctant to acknowledge it as a new and potent form of racism, she said.

A question for Christine Baglai asked why the cities that formed the network of the Intercultural Cities Programme were so concentrated in western Europe, and why there were not more in the east of the continent. Baglai replied that the programme coordinators did indeed want more cities from eastern European states to get involved. She said that the impetus for joining the network lay in the hands of the city authority; to join the network, a city needs to meet a set of requirements, and a representative of the city authority needs to answer around 70 questions to contribute to the index. She added that the programme was open to the idea of members of the public and NGOs helping to get more cities involved, and invited participants to take her details and see if their cities would be interested.

A more general question from a participant concerned increasing levels of hate crime across Europe, even in traditionally tolerant counties such as the UK. She said that across the continent, people feared to express a minority identity (especially true for Roma people), and asked what could be done in the context of the Council of Europe to tackle this problem. The panel were in agreement that more data was needed to bring such problems to the surface. One specific issue that was raised was the need for legal protection for illegal immigrants, who often neglect to report crimes in fear of deportation. It was suggested that this could be provided in the context of police expert units dedicated to tackling hate crime.

Another question posed to the entire panel concerned the rights of refugees, and how refugees can have power to improve the situation within the framework of the Council of Europe. As a representative of PACE, Cornu pointed to the specific committee of the Parliamentary Assembly focusing on refugee rights. Baglai added that the cities in the network of the Intercultural Cities Programme work closely with NGOs, and city
administrations focus on integration through cooperation with NGOs, so refugees can be involved in decision-making processes if they are working with NGOs.

In the participants’ feedback on the session, some noted that, while it was interesting to hear from the various Council of Europe organs focusing on antiracism work, they felt that the organs represented were fairly ineffective in terms of engaging with national governments and the general public in bringing about meaningful change. It was suggested that these organs were too focused on collecting data, and were too far removed from NGOs and grassroots activism.

**Online Racism and Discrimination**

The visit to the Council of Europe was followed by a presentation given by a representative of the German group Jugendschutz.net. This is a government-funded organisation that focuses on protecting young people from extreme content online. She explained that online social media is becoming the main platform for propaganda. Young people are more likely to share items that are fun or visually appealing, hence the rise of content that has been dubbed “Nipster” (a portmanteau of “Nazi” and “Hipster”) that present far-right ideas with the façade of a trendy visual design. Islamophobic content is particularly prevalent, while antisemitic conspiracy theories and videos showing physical violence against LGBT people are also commonly shared. She also talked about methods for countering online hate speech, including legal remedies if content is illegal, as well as counter-speech and educating young people to help them become aware of hate speech and its effects.

Participants then had the opportunity to learn about and practice using online tools for presentations, communication and research. Most of the afternoon was focused on Storymap, an online tool that allows users to create maps based around a set of “slides” documenting incidents and their locations around the world. This is a potentially important tool that could be used by larger, international initiatives or campaigns as a practical way of presenting different cases of a particular situation in various fields. The participants were divided into five groups, each of which created a Storymap presentation focusing on a particular type of hate speech or hate crime.

Although the task seemed quite simple at first, participants had to deal with a number of questions related to the topic and content before applying the tool itself. Issues that came up during the process were related to the choice of the topic, importance and urgency of the topic, geographical diffusion (as the Storymap is first of all a tool for presenting issues existing in larger areas), the overall knowledge of different participants in the chosen topic and actuality of existing cases related to the field.

First of all, the importance and urgency of the topic was perceived as crucial in deciding which topics the groups would focus on. Even though hate speech and hate crime cannot be ranked on an “importance scale”, issues such as status of refugees, the LGBT community or the Roma community emerged as the topics most urgent to deal with, considering the large amount of visible hate speech and hate crime against these groups. Of course, the choice was additionally influenced by participants’ experience or the field they are active in and possess certain knowledge of the current situation. This was, however, not always a good solution as some of the participants were not particularly familiar with the topic the group had chosen, (in some cases, not at all,) and it seemed that they could not engage actively in the process of developing the presentation. But, the upside of the process showed that, although there was not
the opportunity for everyone to participate equally in the development of the presentation, it was a chance for participants to hear and learn about issues that were not familiar to them (this was, for example, the case with the group that focused on the situation of Europe’s Roma minority), something which brought the true meaning in the title “study session” – participants sharing knowledge, experience and practices among themselves.

Groups that had a clear idea of an issue they wanted to present had an easier time developing the Storymap presentation, as the focus was on finding examples that could illustrate the chosen topic. During this process some of these groups had the chance to additionally discuss the problem of representing hate speech and hate crime in a way that does not promote these types of behaviour, but actually shows the problem and even presents a critique of it. This linked back to Christiane Schneider’s presentation, where she talked about the phenomenon of right-wing groups “taking over” content which is intended to raise awareness of and counter hate speech, if it is not presented alongside sufficient commentary and analysis.

The next day groups had the opportunity to present their work and discuss it with other participants. One group focused on the hate speech against refugees used by well-known western European politicians in the public sphere. The presentation tried to show how through these practices they are often not acting as individuals, but united in creating a public discourse that is hostile to refugees and migrants, as they hold a prominent position in the public space.

Another group delivered a presentation on hate speech against women and how it persists in a variety of media, (including social networks, music, mainstream media, and advertising,) and its consequences. Although the topic did not seem urgent at first, reactions by other participants proved that it is still a subject that is not considered strongly enough and that being a human rights activist does not necessarily make a person sensitised to all of the issues related to the field.

This was also visible through the work of the group that focused on the situation of Roma people in Europe. Their presentation focused on famous people of Roma origin. Even though it was done with good intentions, it seemed that the group promoted the most problematic of the views shared by right-wing ideologies – the question of biological origin as determining identity of a person, without being aware of the problem of identity as a social construct. This, however, created an opportunity for the question to arise in the discussion that followed.

Finally, two groups presented problems of the LGBT community, one focusing on negative reactions to Pride protests and LGBT-friendly places in different countries, including cases of aggression, discrimination, etc. The other group presented hate crimes in their countries that is quite visible in the public sphere and shapes public opinion, often going unrecognised as hate speech or hate crime by authorities. Again, both groups focused mostly on presenting the actions of crime, but with the goal of presenting the consequences of hate speech that persists in the public sphere.

In addition to Storymap, participants also learned about other tools for online campaigning and research. One was Line.do, which allows users to create online stories consisting of slides which appear on a timeline. Whereas Storymap is useful for documenting incidents that take place over a large area but at a similar time, Line.do is useful for telling stories where timeframe is more important than location.
Another tool that participants learned about was Diigo, which is a useful tool for online research, allowing users to collect and annotate online documents.

**Tools for Human Rights Education**

Alongside online activism, human rights education (HRE) was presented as a method for countering online and offline racism, hate speech and discrimination. This part of the session began with a presentation outlining key aspects of effective HRE. The presentation described HRE as “a process whereby people learn about their rights and the rights of others, within a framework of participatory and interactive learning.” It made a distinction between learning *about* human rights, learning *for* human rights and learning *through* human rights. Learning *about* human rights was defined as education focusing on knowledge about individuals’ rights, while learning *for* human rights is more about equipping people with skills to help them promote and protect human rights, and learning *through* human rights focuses on developing and shaping attitudes and values.

The presentation also linked HRE to other types of education, such as intercultural and antiracist education, citizenship education and gender education. The presentation concluded by underlining the importance of HRE, both as a human right in and of itself (according to Article 26.2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child) and in its potential to, in the words of former UN secretary general Kofi Anan, “equip people with the tools they need to live lives of security and dignity.”

The presentation was followed by an exploration of a number of the Council of Europe’s tools for HRE. One of the tools that participants looked at was the COMPASS manual, focussing on one activity from the book: *Where do you stand?* In this activity, participants take a position in a room depending on to what extent they agree or disagree with certain statements. Through the activity, participants are able to see how their views compare with those of their contemporaries, and discuss and explain their views on particular topics.

Another tool examined was the education pack *All Different, All Equal*, specifically the activity *Euro-rail à la carte*. In this activity, participants have to choose who, from a list of different types of people, they would like to sit with on the long railway journey from Moscow to Lisbon. Through discussing the reasons for their choices, they learn about the reasons for why we hold different types of prejudice.

One of the key issues that came up in participants’ discussion on this activity was the importance of the facilitator remaining neutral, and being open to the various ideas of the participants. It was agreed that the activity would be most effective if participants were openly encouraged to think “outside the box” and leave their comfort zone; as one participant said “everyone is a human rights activist when they are in their comfort zone,” but it is only when they are encouraged to go outside of this and confront more difficult issues that they can critically engage with the topic and truly learn about the importance of human rights.

Another of the tools that participants learned about was *Enter Dignityland*. This is a card game in which players assume the role of Members of Parliament in the imagined country of Dignityland. Together they come up with a plan for the
development of social rights in the country. Through the game, players become aware of the different types of social rights and their importance to society as a whole.

Participants investigating this activity went through each step of the game, discussing each phase (giving instructions, playing the game and debriefing) in detail and the relevance of each phase to the game and its outcomes. While exploring the game, participants were also able to discuss the issue of social rights and why they are important. As they went through the activity they tried to reflect on how the game would look and identify challenges. One of the biggest challenges with the game is the prioritising the rights, and it was agreed that that was a key issue to focus on during debriefing.

Gender Matters is a manual for human rights education focusing specifically on gender and gender-based violence among young people. The activity the group focused on was Good, Better, Best, in which young people are able to explore preconceptions of gender roles and the differing abilities of men and women by separating different statements on skills and roles into male and female categories, and then analysing the reasons for their choices.

In evaluating this activity, some participants noted that it was a particularly good exercise to do with young people in their early teens, as this is the age at which gender roles begin to become entrenched in their minds. Another participant suggested though, that the exercise could strengthen young people’s conceptions about the differences between men and women rather than to eliminate them; the facilitator replied that this risk could be mitigated by a full and proper debriefing of the activity, and underlined the importance of debriefing in the learning process.

Another topic that had been discussed a great deal over the course of the study session was the rights of Roma people, and the manual Right to Remember focuses on education about the history of persecution of Roma in Europe. Participants looked at an activity in the manual (p. 75) in which young people learn about the impact and extent of the Roma Genocide by using statistics.

An issue that came up in the discussion of this activity was the potential for people to make derogatory comments while participating, which can be difficult for facilitators to deal with. In such cases, participants agreed, the trainer must remain a facilitator, not a teacher, and as with the All Different, All Equal activity, neutrality of the facilitator was once again highlighted as a key point. One participant introduced the idea of dealing with such comments using paraphrasing: saying what the participant has said back to them, but in a more obviously inflammatory way, and seeing how they react; often, hearing their own thoughts expressed in a different will open their eyes to the inherent prejudice in what they have said.

Participants also received a presentation from Jean-Claude Lazaro and Karen Palisser of the European Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe on how to apply for grants to support HRE projects in their home countries. This was useful in giving participants more ideas on where to find support for their continued work after the study session.

**Online Activism**

Alongside human rights education, the study session also promoted effective online activism and campaigning as a means of dealing with hate speech and discrimination.
This part of the study session began with an evaluation of the Council of Europe’s “No Hate Speech Movement” campaign, with a focus on the online tools it utilised. The “No Hate Speech Movement” campaign, run since 2013, aims to combat online hate speech by working with young people and youth organisations to help them recognise and act against such human rights violations. The campaign did not aim to limit freedom of expression, nor to encourage everyone to be “nice” online – rather it was against hate speech in all its forms. The campaign focused on human rights education, youth participation and media literacy.

Online tools played a critical part in the campaign, as it aimed to get people involved by inviting them to create online videos and share texts and resources via an online portal. Participants were also informed about Thunderclap, an online service which can be used to maximise the sharing potential of social media posts, and was utilised during the campaign to encourage people to show solidarity against hate speech and in support of victims of hate speech. The online presence of the “No Hate Speech Movement” campaign also included the service Hate Speech Watch, which invited campaigners and members of the public to report instances of hate speech in the online space. The purpose was not to monitor or react to hate speech, but to be used as an educational tool to show the pervasiveness of online hate speech, and its negative effects.

One of the problems encountered during the campaign was the unforeseen reactions of some of the individuals reported on the Hate Speech Watch website. In particular, members of one US-based forum, which was repeatedly reported and later the subject of a blog post by a “No Hate Speech Movement” activist, reacted firstly by inappropriately using the logos of the Council of Europe and “No Hate Speech Movement” campaign, and then by launching a personal attack on the writer of the blog. While discussing this issue, it was highlighted that sufficient measures to safeguard the security of activists had not been implemented before the campaign, which resulted in an ineffective reaction to the harassment of the activist in question. It was agreed that this was a key lesson to learn for future campaigns.

Another problem highlighted during the working groups at the study session was that the campaign mostly succeeded only in including people who were already involved in human rights and antiracism campaigning. The conclusion reached was that future campaigns need to be more open and focused on reaching out to new people. A lack of resources had also resulted in the campaign often oscillating in terms of the intensity of activities associated with it, and it was agreed that future campaigns should aim for sustained and constant activity over the entirety of their duration.

Following on from this, participants took part in a brainstorming session on what key features made a successful online campaign. Many interesting points were raised, referencing existing campaigns both by NGOs and commercial corporations. Most participants agreed that a successful campaign should have a clear and easily understood message, be highly visible and recognisable, and stay positive. People’s inherent curiosity was also put forward as a key handle for campaigns – especially online campaigns, which are spread mainly by people sharing links through Facebook and other social media; an effective “hook” that plays on curiosity to draw people into finding more about the campaign was therefore identified as an important feature. Another feature common to successful online campaigns that participants pointed to was nomination as a form of sharing the campaign – pointing to the phenomenally successful Ice Bucket Challenge campaign.
Efficient networking to support campaigners, both in delivering the campaign and mitigating any unintended negative effects, was also seen as an important aspect to plan in advance, especially considering the example participants had looked at earlier of online harassment of “No Hate Speech Movement” activists.

Tools and Strategies for Online Campaigning

To give them further ideas about the potential of online campaigns, participants received a presentation from Ron Salaj, an expert on modern campaigning methods, on the development of international protest movements, and the different ways that the Internet and other technologies have affected protest movements worldwide. The presentation began with a look at media coverage of the “millennial” generation, which is often portrayed as lazy, narcissistic and apathetic – despite the large number of major campaigns in recent years implemented primarily by this group and utilising the potential of social media, including the Arab Spring and Occupy movements. The speaker made the comparison of modern criticism of the social media campaigning with Kirkegaard’s criticism of English coffee shop culture in the nineteenth century: constant debate on a wide variety of different subjects erodes people’s authentic relationship with the subject of discussion.

The speaker continued to draw comparisons between the past and present by comparing the contemporary blogosphere with the samizdat publications that were a popular means of protest in the Eastern Bloc in the 1960s. This comparison led to a further look at ways of subverting state censorship, which included a summary of Ethan Zuckerman’s “Cute Cat Theory”, which states that, in order to avoid censorship, online activists should use the same platforms as people use to share mundane content such as pictures of cats, as shutting down or censoring such platforms would provoke much larger derision among the general public than acting against platforms dedicated only to activism.

He moved on to talk about subversive campaigning strategies, beginning with the concept of “Google bombing”, which aims to target a group by creating an alternative group that appears above it in Google search results. The example given to illustrate this was the “English Disco Lovers”, a made-up political party which was created to undermine the activities of UK-based far-right group the English Defence League; as both groups use the abbreviation EDL, when the former gained significant momentum in social media, it was able to overtake the English Defence League as the top-ranked search result for EDL on Google. The speaker compared this to the “laughtivism” concept conceived by Serbian activist Srđa Popović, which advocates using humour as a primary vehicle for political campaigning. This led on to the practice of “brandjacking”, whereby a campaign uses parodies of well-known brands to protest against them. The example given was a parody advert for Kitkat that Greenpeace produced to highlight Nestle’s use of palm oil from Indonesian rainforests. The speaker linked this to the concept of “political hacking”, using the example of Partia e Fortë (“Strong Party”), a satirical political party which, in the last couple of years, has managed to make a significant impact on the politics of Kosovo.

1 All references to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.
The final part of the presentation considered the negative side of contemporary political campaigning. The speaker gave both the Arab Spring and Occupy movement as two examples of fast developing social movements that relied heavily on the Internet and modern communication technology, but pointed to the lack of internal coordination and safeguarding of personal data that resulted from the grassroots nature of both.

This was followed by a practical session in which participants were introduced to a number of useful tools for online campaigning, as well as Internet security tools of interest to activists. The first tool introduced was Canva, an easy-to-use online graphic design tool. Participants were shown how to use the tool to customise their own designs, and how the tool makes it easy to optimise these designs for specific use in social media. Another tool, BeFunky, was introduced as a simple photo editing tool, and was seen as especially useful for adding text and other simple design features to photographs, as well as to apply colour filters and other effects. Participants also looked at Popcorn Maker, an open source video and audio-editing platform, which makes it easy to combine elements from different online videos. Finally, participants were shown Bambuser, a service which allows users to broadcast live video via an online stream.

Following on from this, participants learned about Internet security in the context of online campaigning. This began with a look at the way in which large Internet companies track people’s Internet usage, and further, at the “linkability” of online data, whereby data users share via one service can be linked with other sites, and end up being shared with a number of third parties. As well as learning about online tracking and linkability, participants were shown tools to monitor this and maximise their online anonymity. These include the Lightbeam add-on, which allows users to see which websites are tracking their online activity and the relationships between them. Another useful site is Duck Duck Go which is a search engine that, unlike Google, does not record its users' search history. Further to this, participants learned about how to anonymise their Internet browsing using the Tor system, and how to encrypt e-mails using PGP encryption and the Mailvelope browser plugin. They were also shown Cryptocat, a secure online chatting service.

**Action Day Campaign Plans**

In the final part of the study session, participants began to plan their own campaigns using the tools and skills they had learned over the course of the week. Participants were invited to choose a campaign to work on from one of four annual action days: International Refugee Day, International Human Rights Day, International Day Against Fascism and Antisemitism, and International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia. Participants worked on the campaign plans in groups, and then presented the plans to a plenary session, in which feedback was given, both from other participators and from the study session facilitators.

**International Human Rights Day**

International Human Rights Day is celebrated every year on 10 December, to mark the anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on that day in 1948. The group that worked on this action day decided to focus their campaign on social rights, aiming to raise awareness among young people of positive
rights such as the right to food, work, shelter etc., as well as to provide young people with tools and mechanisms for accessing their rights.

The group planned coordinated online and offline campaigns to mark the day and its build-up. First, there would be an online campaign in the 4-5 days preceding the action day. Considering that the action day takes place in mid-December, the group took inspiration from advent calendars: on each of the days, a new right would be revealed and promoted in the form of an online poster. The posters would take the form of text reading “I have the right to…” alongside an image and further text to illustrate the particular right – e.g. for the right to food, the group proposed a poster reading “You have the right to eat me” alongside a picture of a hamburger; for the right to shelter, a picture of a bed with the text “You have the right to sleep in me” and so on. The posters would be promoted on Facebook and other social media. They would be linked to a blog and webpage with further information and content related to each of the rights, and human rights in general. This campaign would be followed by an offline action day on 10 December, which would involve actions and workshops in a number of cities around Europe.

Feedback from other participants for the group’s plans focused on their choice of images for the online posters. Many participants took issue with the group’s choice of a hamburger to represent the right to food, suggesting that the image used should not depict any animal products, as it could otherwise be confused with the right to eat meat, which would be counterproductive and offend vegetarians and animal rights activists. The group’s choice to depict the right to work using a picture of a wad of cash with the slogan “you have the right to earn me” was also criticised as propagating an inherently capitalistic and consumerist message.

Feedback from facilitators was more focused on the timing of the campaign. It was suggested that 4-5 days was not enough time for the campaign to have a significant effect, and that it would be better to start the online campaign 2-3 weeks before the offline action day. It was also suggested that rather than linking the posters to further information/content, the posters could instead function as “teasers” to get the target group interested in the campaign, with the in-depth information material being released on the day or week of the action day itself.

*International Day Against Fascism and Antisemitism*

Marked annually on 9 November, the International Day Against Fascism and Antisemitism is an action day coordinated by UNITED to commemorate the anniversary of the “Kristallnacht” pogrom in 1938, which is seen as the symbolic beginning of the Nazi holocaust (see campaign logos in Appendix V). The group that focused on this action day also chose young people as their target group, with the campaign’s theme being “understanding fascism today.”

The aim of the campaign would be to raise awareness concerning contemporary fascist movements, and to link the past to the present in order to show that present-day fascism is just as potent – and dangerous – as it was in the past. This led to the proposed campaign slogan of “Fascism today, disaster tomorrow.” Through the campaign, young people lured by the attractions of far right groups would be encouraged to think more critically about their fascistic tendencies. The group proposed to promote the campaign using posters or videos alongside a twitter hashtag, linked to further informational material.
In comparison to the others, this group found it extremely difficult to come to a consensus in order to finalise any concrete campaign plans, mainly down to the differing situations in participants’ home countries; while all agreed that resurgent fascism was a problem in their respective countries, the methods that participants thought might be effective to counter it differed widely, e.g., one participant suggested a subversive poster campaign in which contemporary far-right leaders would be compared to fascist leaders of the past, however this was countered by some other participants, who felt that, in their countries, such a campaign may backfire as there was a lot of sympathy for 20th century fascism.

In their feedback, facilitators advised the group to think more carefully about their target group, making sure that any materials were first and foremost interesting and engaging for young people, and that discussion of the topic focused on how contemporary fascism affects young people.

**International Refugee Day**

A special UN General Assembly resolution in 2001 made 20 June International Refugee Day, taking the date of the former African Refugee Day as a mark of solidarity with Africa, the continent that hosts the most refugees. UNITED had already been coordinating an annual Europe-wide campaign on this day since 1996 (see campaign logo in Appendix V). The group that focused on this action day wanted their campaign to help change the public opinion towards refugees, and to help refugees to integrate into the societies of their host countries.

To mark the day, the group planned a range of actions, centred around a street festival, where there would be traditional food and street music provided by refugees. There would also be a human library event at the festival, as well as a “refugee market”, where refugees could share recipes and music, which would also take place online. Participating organisations would produce campaign videos, and upload them to YouTube. The online part of the campaign would also include blogs, sharing stories of 2nd and 3rd generation refugees and their experience in their respective host countries. The campaign would start online two weeks before the 20th June, and would look to involve NGOs and media.

In their feedback, facilitators stressed that the group should try to streamline the campaign as much as possible, making sure they do not spread focus and resources across too many different activities. It was also suggested that the group could take inspiration from “Twestival”, a street festival organised online by Twitter-users. Other participants suggested that the campaign would be most effective if, as much as possible, work on planning and implementation was carried out by refugees themselves.

**International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia**

17 May is the International Day against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT), the date chosen to commemorate the decision to remove homosexuality from the International Classification of Diseases of the World Health Organization on 17 May 1990. The group planning for this campaign decided to focus on raising awareness of the IDAHOBIT movement among young people, using the title “Epic IDAHOBIT Day.”

The group’s idea was to create a network of organisations that support the campaign in the participants’ home cities, which would aim to overall involve at least 250
people. The campaign would have online and offline components. The online part of the campaign would involve an online map (created using the Storymap tool used during the study session) to document and promote the actions organised for the action day, as well as an online postcard sharing forum, where activists could share images and ideas connected with the action day. The group also planned to use a Twitter hashtag, to write and share a blog and press articles in different languages, and to have an online poll to see which offline activities should be prioritised for the campaign.

The offline part of the campaign would include asking cafes and bars to put stickers on their cups to show their support for LGBT rights, as well as balloon-launching flash mobs and free hugs actions. All of this campaigning would lead up to the main event of the action day – a picnic flash mob, where anyone who wanted to take part could join to eat, drink and discuss the issues and challenges of the modern LGBT movement.

The group was able to go quite far in preparing for the action day, which included delegating preparation work to different members of the group, and planning a timeline, which allocated two weeks for preparing materials, one week for promoting the campaign, and one week of action – perhaps allocating each day of the week to a different gender identity or sexual orientation. The group also planned to prepare a short presentation on why their motivation for the campaign, with statistical information and background explanations.

The group’s detailed plan elicited positive feedback from other participants and facilitators, though there was some concern that they had planned too many activities in too short a timeframe, and that they may be spreading their resources too thinly. The group countered that the activities suggested were at this stage just ideas, not all of which would be carried through to implementation – but that priority was on the flash mob picnic action.
Main Outcomes

Learning Points for Participants
In their feedback on what they had learned during the study session, the aspects mentioned most by participants were the tools and strategies for effective online campaigning, as well as information about Internet security, and tools to improve security and maximise anonymity online.

Another key point that participants said they would take with them from the session was the importance and relevance of human rights education in the context of combatting hate speech, hate crime and discrimination, as well as information on the tools and resources they could use for human rights education with young people.

Following on from this, many participants pointed to the extra information and insight they had gained into the work of the Council of Europe. The mechanism of the European Court of Human Rights, and the relationship between the different Council of Europe organs working on relevant themes, were particular points of interest to participants.

Alongside this, participants responded that a key learning point was on the different types of hate speech, hate crime and discrimination faced by many people in Europe today, and many participants pointed to specific groups they learned more about, especially Roma and the LGBT community.

Finally, participants appreciated the unique opportunity offered by a UNITED event to get to know about a range of organisations active in the antiracism, antidiscrimination and human rights field. They were also happy to learn more about UNITED and how they and their respective organisations can contribute to the UNITED network.

Outcomes for UNITED
Conferences and study sessions form a key part of the work of the UNITED network, which was able to work towards its long-term goals simply by bringing participants from all over Europe together to share their skills and experiences and learn more about the problems of racism, discrimination, hate speech and hate crime, as well as strategies for dealing with the problems.

For most of the participants the study session was also their first experience of an event organised by the UNITED network. The study session thus contributed to the reinforcement of the network by giving the participants a much more detailed picture of UNITED and its work. This study session brought together new participants from different organisations around Europe, who will be able to work together on future projects, as well as to contribute their views to the network and secretariat, allowing UNITED to use the information gathered and feed it back into planning for future activities and projects.

The campaigns that participants planned during the study session, and will now further develop and implement, all fall within the objectives of the UNITED network, and two of them, Refugee Day and Day Against Fascism and Antisemitism, are key annual campaigns of the UNITED network. Discussions in working groups focusing
on these campaigns will be used to feed into the planning of these campaigns, and the materials produced for them.

**Recommendations for the Council of Europe**

While the study session was generally successful in fulfilling its aims, and feedback from participants was extremely positive, some participants felt that the session could have gone even deeper in analysing the key issues, and more time could have been provided for working on the follow-up campaigns. Some facilitators also agreed that they could have been clearer in what they expected from participants in terms of the campaign planning, and that this may have resulted in more concrete plans for follow-up activities.

It is thus recommended that in future study sessions, more time should be given for the planning and preparation of follow-up activities. While it is essential that participants play a leading role in these activities, facilitators should also ensure that the participants are given sufficient guidance and support to be able to come up with concrete conclusions that can be successfully implemented after the end of the study session.

Discussions at the study session and the contribution and reactions of participants also highlighted the fact that there is much work to be done in promoting education on the issue of Roma rights and awareness of discrimination faced by Roma people across Europe. It is clear that the Council of Europe should continue to focus resources on improving its coverage of this issue, and that there is a necessity for further study sessions and training programmes dedicated to the subject.
Follow-up Activities

Following the study session, participants will continue to develop and implement their plans for campaigns to mark a number of key action days: International Human Rights Day, International Day Against Fascism and Antisemitism, International Refugee Day, and International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia, utilising the new skills and network of contacts that they gained during the study session.

The participants will take the primary role in the follow-up to the study session, as it will be they that plan and implement the campaigns, although UNITED will also provide support to help the campaigns reach their full potential. This will mainly be through providing networking opportunities and contacts to facilitate know-how transfer, ensuring that participants have all the skills and knowledge necessary for the campaigns’ successful implementation. The UNITED network will also support the dissemination and promotion of campaign materials.

The IDAHOBIT group continued to make significant progress in organising their campaign. Following the end of the study session, the group set up a private Facebook group to continue their discussions and delegate tasks, and also started work on the blog, created a draft press statement, shared ideas for poster and social media graphic designs, and produced designs for stickers to be attached to cups in bars and cafes.

The group published their blog, which opened with the group’s statement on the campaign, on 23 April (accessible at http://idahobitday2015.blogspot.com/). The blog features links to and content associated with both the UNITED network and the Council of Europe. The blog also includes the group’s sticker and postcard designs, alongside an invitation for members of the public to print and use them, and to get involved in other parts of the campaign. The planned picnic flash mob event went ahead in some of the participants’ cities, although, with only a short time to make preparations, not all of the planned campaign activities were possible to implement in time for this year’s action day.

International Refugee Day and the International Day Against Fascism and Antisemitism are both key UNITED annual campaigns, and ideas were further developed at the subsequent UNITED conference in Spain. Ideas raised during the study session will feed into the planning for these campaigns, and study session participants will be invited to contribute further to the planning and implementation of the campaigns. Working groups at UNITED study sessions and conferences play a key role in developing strategies and materials for these campaigns.
**Final Programme**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09:00</td>
<td><strong>ARRIVAL &amp; FREE ADMISSION</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09:30</td>
<td><strong>HELLO &amp; WELCOME</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00-13:00</td>
<td><strong>ONLINE ACTIVISM - 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:30-16:00</td>
<td><strong>GET ACTIVE - 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16:30-18:00</td>
<td><strong>HATE SPEECH</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:00-18:30</td>
<td><strong>Reflection and feedback on ONLINE RACISM &amp; DISCRIMINATION - 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19:00-21:00</td>
<td><strong>REFLECTION AND FEEDBACK</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21:30-22:30</td>
<td><strong>FAREWELL PARTY</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22:30-03:00</td>
<td><strong>BREAKING THE BLOCKS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03:00-06:00</td>
<td><strong>INFO-MARKET</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06:00-08:00</td>
<td><strong>VIDEO EVENING</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08:00-10:00</td>
<td><strong>ONLINE ACTIVISM - 2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00-11:00</td>
<td><strong>PRESENTING THE STRATEGIES</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00-12:30</td>
<td><strong>GET ACTIVE - 2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30-13:00</td>
<td><strong>FREE AFTERNOON</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:00-14:30</td>
<td><strong>EXPLORING &amp; DEVELOPING TOOLS FOR ONLINE ACTIVISM</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:30-16:00</td>
<td><strong>ANTI-RACISM ACTIVISM FROM A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16:00-17:30</td>
<td><strong>ONLINE ACTIVISM</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17:30-19:00</td>
<td><strong>ONLINE RACISM &amp; DISCRIMINATION - 2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19:00-20:00</td>
<td><strong>EXPERIENCING THE TOPICS - 2</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
- **TIME**
- **ARRIVAL & FREE ADMISSION**
- **HELLO & WELCOME**
- **ONLINE ACTIVISM - 1**
- **GET ACTIVE - 1**
- **HATE SPEECH**
- **Reflection and feedback on ONLINE RACISM & DISCRIMINATION - 1**
- **REFLECTION AND FEEDBACK**
- **FAREWELL PARTY**
- **BREAKING THE BLOCKS**
- **INFO-MARKET**
- **VIDEO EVENING**
- **ONLINE ACTIVISM - 2**
- **PRESENTING THE STRATEGIES**
- **GET ACTIVE - 2**
- **FREE AFTERNOON**
- **EXPLORING & DEVELOPING TOOLS FOR ONLINE ACTIVISM**
- **ANTI-RACISM ACTIVISM FROM A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE**
- **ONLINE ACTIVISM**
- **ONLINE RACISM & DISCRIMINATION - 2**
- **EXPERIENCING THE TOPICS - 2**

**6-13 April 2015 - European Youth Centre, Council of Europe, Strasbourg (France)**

(Re)Act for equal opportunities online and offline
## List of Participating Organisations

**UNITED STUDY SESSION - LIST OF PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS**

(Re)Act for Equal Opportunities Online and Offline  
6-13 April 2015, European Youth Centre, Council of Europe, Strasbourg (France)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Webpage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accept LGBT Cyprus</td>
<td>Cyprus</td>
<td><a href="http://www.acceptcy.org">www.acceptcy.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne Frank Foundation</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td><a href="http://www.annefrank.nl">www.annefrank.nl</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antidiscrimination Centre Memorial - St. Petersburg</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td><a href="http://www.memorial.spb.ru">www.memorial.spb.ru</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art. 1 Midden Nederland</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td><a href="http://www.art1middennederland.nl">www.art1middennederland.nl</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association of Culture and Youth</td>
<td>France</td>
<td><a href="http://www.juvisy.fr/jeunesse">www.juvisy.fr/jeunesse</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associazione Trepuntozero</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td><a href="http://www.trepuntozero.org">www.trepuntozero.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre for Intercultural Dialogue</td>
<td>&quot;the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia&quot;</td>
<td><a href="http://www.cid.mk">www.cid.mk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conseil de la Jeunesse Pluriculturelle</td>
<td>France</td>
<td><a href="http://www.cojep.com">www.cojep.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DUHA - Rainbow Association</td>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td><a href="http://www.duha.cz">www.duha.cz</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erasmus Student Network Kaunas University of Technology</td>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>ktu.esnlithuania.org</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Youth Centre Strasbourg</td>
<td>France</td>
<td><a href="http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/eyc/Strasbourg_en.asp">www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/eyc/Strasbourg_en.asp</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Youth Parliament - Ukraine</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td><a href="http://www.eyp-ua.org">www.eyp-ua.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Youth Parliament - Armenia</td>
<td>Armenia</td>
<td>eyparmenia.org</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope for Children - Hungary</td>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td><a href="http://www.remenytagermeknek.hu">www.remenytagermeknek.hu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated Project Management Association for Calabria in Europe</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>apiceue.wix.com/apice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Young Naturefriends</td>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td><a href="http://www.iynf.org">www.iynf.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jugendschutz.net / Hate in the Net - Hass Im Netz</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td><a href="http://www.hass-im-netz.info">www.hass-im-netz.info</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kisa - Action for Equality-Support and Antiracism</td>
<td>Cyprus</td>
<td><a href="http://www.kisa.org.cy">www.kisa.org.cy</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movimiento Contra la Intolerancia - Málaga</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td><a href="http://www.movimientocontralaintolerancia.com">www.movimientocontralaintolerancia.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omladinski Centar CK13</td>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ck13.org">www.ck13.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Society Institute - Sofia</td>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td><a href="http://www.osi.bg">www.osi.bg</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pink Armenia - Public Information and Need of Knowledge</td>
<td>Armenia</td>
<td><a href="http://www.pinkarmenia.org/en">www.pinkarmenia.org/en</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RADAR Rotterdam-Rijnmond &amp; Brabant-Noord</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td><a href="http://www.radar.nl">www.radar.nl</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rainbow Association - Community LGBT &amp; their Supporters</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td><a href="http://www.radarus.org">www.radarus.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanian National Council for Refugees</td>
<td>Romania</td>
<td><a href="http://www.cnrr.ro">www.cnrr.ro</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sereno Regis Study Center</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td><a href="http://www.serenoregis.org">www.serenoregis.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stand Against Racism and Inequalities</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>sariweb.org.uk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNITED for Intercultural Action</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td><a href="http://www.unitedagainstracism.org">www.unitedagainstracism.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Association DRONI</td>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td><a href="http://www.droni.org">www.droni.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Center Jajce</td>
<td>Bosnia-Herzegovina</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ocjajce.com">www.ocjajce.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZARA - Zivilcourage und Antirassismus Arbeit</td>
<td>Austria</td>
<td><a href="http://www.zara.or.at">www.zara.or.at</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- UNITED for Intercultural Action  
  Postbus 413  
  NL-1000 AK Amsterdam  
  Phone: +31-20-6834778  
  info@unitedagainstracism.org  
  www.unitedagainstracism.org

- UNITED STUDY SESSION - LIST OF PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS

31
Appendix III: List of References


Appendix IV: List of Online Links

UNITED publicity material about the study session:

http://www.unitedagainstracism.org/conferences/conference-archive/react-for-equal-opportunities/ Pages related to the study session on the UNITED website.
https://www.facebook.com/UNITEDnetworkConference?fref=ts The UNITED Conference Against Racism Facebook page, where regular updates about the study session were posted.
https://storify.com/JonoUnited/united-study-session-re-act-for-equal-opportunitie-1 A Storify account of the study session, bringing together all of the UNITED Facebook posts and other online material.

Online tools used

http://storymap.knightlab.com/ Storymap, a tool for creating stories using maps
http://line.do/ Line.do, a tool for creating stories with a timeline
https://www.diigo.com/ Diigo, a tool for online research
http://www.canva.com/ Canva, a graphic design tool
http://www.befunky.com BeFunky, a photo-editing tool
https://popcorn.webmaker.org/ Popcorn maker, a video-editing tool
http://bambuser.com/ Bambuser, a tool for creating live video streams online
http://www.duckduckgo.com/ Duck Duck Go, a search engine that does not track internet usage
https://www.mailvelope.com/ Mailvelope, a browser plugin for e-mail encryption
https://crypto.cat/ Cryptocat, a secure online chat platform
https://www.thunderclap.it/ Thunderclap, a service for maximising the sharing potential of social media posts
https://www.torproject.org/ Tor, a protocol for browsing the internet anonymously

Other links relevant to the study session:

http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/video/2015/mar/18/everyday-racism-what-should-we-do Video of British rapper, poet and journalist Akala talking about his experience of everyday racism
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LBLBxb29maw An extract from the Dutch film Our Colonial Hangover
Appendix V: UNITED Campaign Materials

Logos for International Day Against Fascism and Antisemitism (9th November):

![Logo for International Day Against Fascism and Antisemitism](image1)

![Logo for International Day Against Fascism and Antisemitism](image2)

Logo for International Refugee Day (20th June):

![Logo for International Refugee Day](image3)
With thanks to…

We would like to thank all International Preparatory Group members: Sergio, Claudio, Ana, Matej and Anouska for their dedicated work in preparing the programme and facilitating the study session. We would especially like to express our gratitude to our educational advisor, Simona Molari, who became an indispensable member of the team with her wealth of experience and insights into human rights education.

We would also like to thank our expert speakers: Christiane Schneider and Ron Salaj, as well as the Council of Europe representatives Stefano Valenti, Christina Baglai, Elise Cornu, Jean-Claude Lazaro and Karen Palisser, all of whom added a great deal to the value of the study session for participants.

Special thanks are extended to everyone in the Youth Department of the Council of Europe who helped to make this study session a reality, as well as all of UNITED’s other sponsors and supporters, without whom it would not be possible to continue our work.

Finally we would like to thank all of the participants, who contributed so much to the study session through their open-minded and dedicated approach. Their knowledge and enthusiasm is a testament to the strength of the European human rights movement.
We are UNITED

UNITED

We believe that racism can only be combated by unity. Since 1993, more than 560 organisations from 46 European countries have joined to make Europe a better place – for all. We have to stand together, be united to support the anti-racist and anti-discrimination vision and to speak out against racism and the negative political tendencies in Europe! With an authentic and living movement we can put antiracism into the mainstream of contemporary culture. Young people can and should be a part of the solution to the problem of racism. The movement can grow with their opinions and their visions of the Europe they want to live in.

FOR

We stand for unity and hope, fascists spread division and fear. Our vision is one of peaceful co-existence and intercultural respect all over the world. Together we want to build a Europe of tolerance and solidarity, a Europe of respect and perspectives. Diversity is for us more than just living our lives next to each other. Intercultural understanding and cooperation is our goal.

INTERCULTURAL

The best way to stop racism is to get to know each other and to learn from common experience. Every organisation is an expert in its field and in its region, all sharing the same goals. Strengthening these existing intercultural relations between civil societies, minority groups and political and economical actors is UNITED’s most important target. Diversity is a virtue, solidarity a duty.

ACTION

It’s the variety and creativity that makes UNITED campaigns unique. By linking local and national actions, we can generate European-wide solidarity and publicity. We can show that there is an enormous amount of people that believe in an intercultural open society.

European-wide campaigns against racism (21 March), in support of refugees (20 June) and against fascism and antisemitism (9 November) have been overwhelmingly successfully coordinated by UNITED for more than a decade.

UNITED also does effective lobby-work at the European commission, the OSCE and the Council of Europe to make our voice heard. Raising awareness in all fields of life – that’s the key to defeat racism!
UNITED is supported by:

- more than 550 organisations from all European countries
- many prominent individuals
- private supporters
- long-term volunteers from Aktion Sühnezeichen Friedensdienste, Austrian Holocaust Memorial Service and the EVS, Grundtvig and Leonardo Programmes of the European Union.

This publication reflects the views only of the authors, and the sponsors cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. UNITED’s publications can be freely re-used, translated and re-distributed, provided the source: www.unitedagainstracism.org - is mentioned and a copy is send to the UNITED secretariat.