



Project on Addressing Hate Speech among Young People

A project had been initiated to tackle the alarming rise in hate speech, behavior, and attitudes among young people, especially within the digital domain of social media. The catalyst for this undertaking was local research that had been conducted from January to June 2020. The findings showed:

- A significant percentage of young people had experienced hate speech due to cultural differences.
- A notable percentage had participated in bullying without understanding the reasons behind their actions.
- A majority of professionals who worked with young people had confronted hate speech in their professional environment.
- There was a pronounced demand among these professionals for tools and methods to counteract hate speech effectively.
- The central aim of the project had been to bolster the capabilities of youth workers, preparing them to handle and redirect hate speech, especially in contexts that involved minorities, Roma, refugees, and migrant youth.

A week-long training named "Say not to Hate" was organized in Bludenz, Austria, in April 2023. The training focused on:

1. Introducing participants to the prevailing issues.
2. Delving into the origins and layers of hate speech.
3. Understanding the manifestations of hate speech both online and offline.
4. Recognizing the profound impact of violent beliefs on the youth.
5. Examining the emotions that fueled and were triggered by hate speech.
6. Addressing the needs that sprang from incidents of hate speech.
7. Laying the groundwork for future collaborative efforts to combat the issue.

Eligibility for participation was limited to members, staff, or volunteers of the partner organizations. The criteria stipulated that they had to be over 18, possess basic English proficiency, and participate fully in the training sessions.

After the training, partners had organized local events targeting youth NGOs, schools, and other social institutions. The aim was to embed intercultural methods and policies that could combat hate speech in youth work contexts. An E-Booklet, encapsulating the methods and tools for managing hate speech, had been created and disseminated widely. The intention was to reach both a local and broader audience, with aspirations to influence local youth policies. The hope was that thousands of professionals would access the content through various platforms.



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