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No Hate Speech Movement kicks off at the Council of Europe

Strasbourg, 19.03.2013 - An overflow of xenophobia, intolerance and discrimination inundates cyberspace: *Hate Speech online* has recently turned into a major form of human rights abuse, with serious consequences both online and offline. Spreading, inciting, justifying or promoting expressions of hatred amongst young people on internet has become a pressing challenge for today's societies.

Prejudice based on aggressive nationalism and ethnocentrism, hostility against minorities, bigotry on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity, anti-Semitism, misogyny, christianophobia, cyber-bullying, anti-gypsyism and islamophobia: the potential negative impact of online communication on democratic development gives several reasons for concern.

The Council of Europe's answer to these compelling threats is the [Youth project on combating Hate Speech Online](#), an initiative aiming at fighting racism and discrimination in the online articulation of hate speech, by equipping young people and youth organisations with the competences necessary to recognise and act against such human rights violations.

Bloggers and activists will be trained at the [European Youth Centres](#) in Strasbourg and Budapest, with an innovative capacity building approach on activating sane social networks' communities.

Secretary General Thorbjørn Jagland will be the first to launch the **No Hate Speech Movement** on Friday, March 22nd, at the *Palais de l'Europe* (in the *foyer* of the Hemicycle). The event is open to the accredited press ([Live web streaming](#))

This raise awareness operation to change attitudes and mobilise people to uphold human rights online will be combined with national youth campaigns, starting in 33 Council of Europe member states, with [EEA Norway Grants](#) as strategic partner and voluntary contributions from Finland and the French-speaking Community of Belgium.

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