

# Youth Activism Forum

Turning words into action to  
address anti-Semitism,  
intolerance and discrimination

02 - 04 November 2016

Council of Europe Youth  
Center Budapest

## Summary Report



**Disclaimer:** This report should not be interpreted as comprising official OSCE recommendations based on a consensus decision, an opinion of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights or of any particular OSCE participating State. The content of this report reflects opinions expressed by participants of the Forum which took place on 02 - 04 November 2016.



## **INTRODUCTION:**

The OSCE's *Berlin+10 Conference* on addressing anti-Semitism which took place in November 2014, as well as previous civil society events organized on the margins of OSCE human dimension events, highlighted the need for broad, inclusive and diverse civil society coalitions that support governments in their efforts to prevent and address hate crime and discrimination. OSCE commitments also highlight the need for participating States to support the development of civil society and constructively engage with them to end intolerance and discrimination.

Hate crime and discrimination continues to assume new forms and expressions which, along with other acts of intolerance, pose a threat to personal security and, therefore, to overall security in the OSCE region and beyond.

OSCE participating States have agreed on developing a comprehensive approach to preventing and responding to hate crimes and discrimination and supporting civil society in several OSCE Ministerial Council Decisions (MC Decision Nos. 13/2006, 10/2007, 9/2009, 3/2013), as well as its 2014 Basel Declaration.

Notwithstanding these commitments, it is clear that government responses to bias-motivated violence, intolerance and discrimination have been inadequate. Despite making official commitments to end hate crime and discrimination, many governments have yet to introduce necessary legislative tools, carry out official monitoring of incidents or implement police training, educational, and community engagement programs that would contribute to a more robust response to these human rights violations.

For this reason, civil society plays a major role in addressing discrimination and intolerance. It can also play an important role in identifying areas in need of improved government responses and by initiating its own educational and monitoring activities. Of course, promoting tolerance and ending hate crime throughout the OSCE region is too large and complex an issue for any one organization or activist to tackle. Given these circumstances, putting together a coalition of groups and individuals can be an effective strategy for change - in schools, universities, business, governments, and other relevant sectors.

OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) is currently implementing a multi-year project on "Turning Words into Action to Address Anti-Semitism" funded by an extra-budgetary contribution from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany. Recognizing the vital role that civil society in general, and youth activists in particular, play in confronting anti-Semitism, discrimination and intolerance, ODIHR is organizing a youth activism seminar on **"Turning words into action to address anti-Semitism, intolerance and discrimination"**.

## **Executive summary:**

The Seminar brought together 67 participants (including 37 women) from 31 participating States and 1 Mediterranean Partner for Co-operation including politicians, journalists, civil servants, civil society, media representatives and online activists. Seminar participants increased their knowledge about OSCE tools and commitments, shared good practices, built new partnerships and networks, and developed recommendations for the OSCE participating States and the OSCE executive structures.



The Seminar took place on 2-4 November 2016 in Budapest. The event brought together relevant actors and experts in the field of youth activism at the international, European, national and local level who are dealing with issues of intolerance and discrimination.

The Seminar also explored ways of bringing different youth activist groups closer to each other in order to create networks and coalitions with agendas supportive of human rights, tolerance and non-discrimination. Presentations and discussions addressed the interrelated issues of anti-Semitism, racism, xenophobia and gender equality, among other topics. Participants also shared examples of good practices and challenges in the OSCE region.

The Seminar involved three groups of young activists, representing youth from the most informal structures to the most formal ones. Following the welcome address, keynote speech, introduction,

panel discussion and the presentation on OSCE commitments the plenary, the participants split into working groups. Working groups were established based on the participants' preferences outlined in the application call. Stemming from this, three working groups were formed: Group 1 – Voice, Group 2 – Influence, and Group 3 – Governance.



The participants in the three working groups discussed challenges to the participation of youth in politics from the following perspectives:

**Voice, working group 1**, addressed the informal mechanisms of political participation and focused on online political activism utilised by engaged individuals or groups as the key informal agents of youth activism.

**Influence, working group 2**, tackled semi-informal mechanisms of political participation and focused on non-governmental organisations that utilise various advocacy and lobbying tools that may be either online or offline in nature.

**Governance, working group 3**, deliberated on the formal mechanisms of political participation and focused on institutions and actors central to the concept of governance.

The three groups were created on the first day of the Seminar, and remained throughout the event. Each group's sessions were moderated by experts and ODIHR rapporteurs.

The Working Group – Session I served to initiate the development of recommendations and action points that were presented at the end of the seminar. Participants shared good practices of coalition building, intra-community initiatives, actions and policy interventions thus aiming at presenting recommendations/action points. Rapporteurs collected and circulated initial recommendations based on the first day of discussions.

## OBJECTIVES:

- Bring together youth activists from different communities, and from throughout the OSCE region, in order to facilitate networking and the development of strong and lasting coalitions that will aim to join forces in an effort to reduce anti-Semitism, intolerance and discrimination;
- Identify common issues and concerns in the fight against anti-Semitism, intolerance and discrimination, that can best be addressed through joining forces, either at a national or regional level; identify issues related to anti-Semitism, intolerance and discrimination that are of special concern to youth;
- Develop recommendations on how best to promote coalition-building among youth groups to address anti-Semitism, intolerance and discrimination in the OSCE participating states.

## AGENDA

### Day 1, Wednesday, 02 November

17:00 – 18:00 Registration

19:00 – 21:00 **Reception at the Swedish Embassy, Diana street 16/C. 1125 Budapest**  
Hosted by **H.E. Ambassador Niclas Trouvé**



### Day 2, Thursday, 03 November

09:00 – 11:00 Guided tour of the Budapest Synagogue

11:30 – 11:45 **Opening remarks**  
**Cristina Finch**, Head, Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Department, OSCE/ODIHR  
**Bálint Molnar**, Deputy Executive Director, European Youth Centre Budapest  
**Milena Stošić**, Special Representative of the Chairmanship-in-Office on Youth and Security



- 11:45 – 12:00      **Video - LZ Granderson – “The myth of the gay agenda” – TED talk**
- 12:00 – 12:15      **Case-Study on Coalition Building to Address anti-Semitism**  
**Sacha Reingewirtz**, President, Union of French Jewish Students
- 12:15 – 12:30      **Introduction to the event**  
Introduction of the participants and agenda  
**Peter Mossop**, Democratic Governance Officer, Democratization Department, OSCE/ODIHR  
**Dejan Petrovic**, Communication Officer, Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Department, OSCE/ODIHR
- 12:30 – 14:00      Lunch & group photo
- 14:00 – 14:30      Wake and shake – energizer
- 14:30 – 16:00      **Panel discussion followed by Q & A session: Generation “Activism”**  
**Arzu Geybullayeva**, Freelance Journalist and Activist  
**Xheni Karaj** – Albania, Executive Director, The Alliance Against LGBT Discrimination  
**Benjamin Fischer**, President, European Union of Jewish Students  
Facilitator: **Dejan Petrovic**
- 16:00 – 16:30      Networking time – getting to know each other





16:30 – 18:30

**Thematic Discussions (Thematic Working Groups) sharing experiences of coalition building**

**Working Group – Session I:** This session will serve to initiate the development of recommendations and action points to be presented at the end of the seminar. All participants will share experiences with coalition building: difficulties, challenges, and good practices in relation to their respective fields. Moderators will introduce the topics and facilitate discussions and then collect and circulate initial recommendations from the first day of discussions.

- Group 1 - Voice: Moderator: **Arzu Geybullayeva**
- Group 2 - Influence: Moderator: **Xheni Karaj**
- Group 3 - Governance: Moderator: **Benjamin Fischer**

19:00 – 20:00

**OSCE Commitments and Initiatives Pertaining to Anti-Semitism, Intolerance and Discrimination: Good Practices and Challenges, followed by Q&A session**

Facilitator: **Cristina Finch**, Head, Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Department, OSCE/ODIHR

**Michael Georg Link**, Director, OSCE/ODIHR

**Rabbi Andrew Baker**, Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Anti-Semitism



20:15 – 23:00      Dinner followed by networking evening

### Day 3, Friday, 04 November

09:15 – 09:30      **Opening of the second day**, Peter Mossop and Dejan Petrovic, OSCE/ODIHR

09:30 – 12:00      **Working Group – Session II:** *Discussions from the first day continue. Each working group works on the recommendations they wish to put forward to the plenary. This session will be focused on developing and finalising recommendations based on the previous day's discussions and sharing of experiences*

- Group 1 - Voice:                      Moderator: **Arzu Geybullayeva**
- Group 2 - Influence:                Moderator: **Xheni Karaj**
- Group 3 - Governance:            Moderator: **Benjamin Fischer**



12:00 – 13:00

**Lunch**

13:00 – 14:00

**Plenary: Presentation of recommendations/action points resulting from thematic discussions and the way forward.** Rapporteurs present the recommendations and action points from each of the working groups. The floor will then be opened for final remarks and questions.

14:00 – 14:15

**Closing remarks**

**Cristina Finch**, Head, Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Department, OSCE/ODIHR



## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

### **Working Group 1 - VOICE**

Working Group 1 addressed informal mechanisms of political participation and focused on online political activism utilized by engaged individuals or groups as the key informal agents of youth activism.

#### **Challenges faced**

- Inclusion of minorities in activist groups
- Sustainability of grassroots organizations
- Informal ways of participation (clicktivism)
- How to build an organic audience and how to raise awareness for our cause in informal ways?
- Protection of digital rights in general and anonymity where there are sensitive issues

#### **Proposals**

- More involvement of local civil society organizations and actors, and a strengthening of cooperation where it already exists in the OSCE member states.
- In partnering with local organizations and actors in the field, OSCE could better assess the needs specific to national contexts, and respond to them through informal education
- Informal education for civil society actors working with discriminated and marginalized groups

- Example: Theatre of the Oppressed is a cause that supports political and social change and can be used to assess the needs of a community
- Informal education includes trainings and workshops pertaining to organization building, sustainability and management, social media literacy, digital rights, and other issues that depend on the assessment of needs in cooperation with local actors.
- We further propose the continuation of the working groups Voice, Influence and Governance, maybe even with events about specific topics that came up for each working group.
- We also propose an inclusion of individuals and companies facilitating activism today, for example social media companies (Facebook, Twitter, Google) or tech companies to develop together with them our strategies and develop solutions for the strategies we are facing.

### **Working Group 2 - INFLUENCE**

Working Group 2 tackled semi-informal mechanisms of political participation and focused on non-governmental organisations that utilise different advocacy and lobbying tools that may be either online or offline in nature.

Below are the recommendations, divided into categories and presented as bullet points. Each recommendation will be allocated to a certain subcategory, depending on the nature of the recommendation.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **Online influence**

- A meeting between social media (i.e. Twitter, Facebook managers and activists could be organized in order to allow youth activists to understand better what the policies, terms and conditions are for the use of such platforms as influence tools (*meeting/event*)
- Training of online community managers and moderators in order to increase efficiency of online influencing activities. Special focus should be given to the credibility of online content (*training*)
- Invite online public figures (e.g. famous bloggers or YouTube personalities) to promote a certain cause via their outlets (*Stakeholder liaison/campaign*)

#### **Rewards**

- Award best-practices in advocacy activities by CSOs (e.g. best campaigns awards, etc.)

### **Policy-making influence**

- Incentivise face-to-face meetings between local leaders and civil society organizations, such as the Human Dimension Implementation meetings to make them more impactful at the national level. (*meeting/event*)
- Incentivise the understanding and the utility of policy-making platforms and tools: committees' policy consultation phase, petitions, Ombudsman, etc.– with strong focus on online tools for influence (online legislative repositories, online petition platforms, etc.) Again, to make them more impactful at the national level (*training*)

### **Community influence**

- Incentivize network building within the CSO community at national and local levels in order for information and resource sharing to take place on a more regular basis (*training*)

### **Educating for influence**

- Educate youth on the capacity of CSOs to influence: what tools they use, formats they take and influence they have (*campaign*)
- Educate multipliers (teachers, community leaders, etc.) on youth activism and incentivize them to promote CSO capacity to influence (*training*)

### **Fundraising for influence**

- The group concluded that there are low chances of success for any activity without funds. The group recommended that, in order to make influence, there should be more support to CSOs, via funding schemes of a private or public nature. CSOs should be informed about these, and informed on how to access the funds (*training/information campaign*)

### **Intergenerational dialogue as influence**

- The best way to understand how to influence is to understand the current influencers and influences. Liaison with the current generation in power is crucial in order to know how best to influence (*meeting/event*)
- Mentorship programmes, where senior leaders (policy-makers or CSOs) share their know-how with young activities (*meeting/event*)

### Working Group 3 - GOVERNANCE

The working group on governance was built around questions of political activism and Youth engagement. The two working days that they spent together were split into individual and collective working. The group first presented our work, shared best practices and experiences in order to then develop individual strategies for our political efforts.

Our main recommendations for ODIHR were:

- A database which consists of NGOs divided by areas they take into consideration;
- A youth platform that makes the political processes of the OSCE more accessible (in the style of model UN/Youth parliaments);
- A training seminar fully devoted to coalition building;
- A list/database of accessible foundations for accessible funding;
- Internships built around direct experiences from coalition building;
- A variety of participants addressed the need for recognition of the exact definitions (Islamophobia/anti-Semitism);
- Trainings on policy making;
- A youth representative who could take part in conferences such as HDIM;
- A youth HDIM;
- Trainings in public relations with journalists participating;
- A tool kit on coalition building that takes the youth dimension into account;
- A training for small/youth NGO's in grant writing.

## LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

1. **Tural Ahmad** - Azerbaijan
2. **Niah Anson** - United States
3. **Ela Cenudioglu** - Turkey
4. **Besart Çopa** - Albania
5. **Jędrzej Czerep** - Poland
6. **Mark Dolinsky** - Ukraine
7. **Tinatini Dvalishvili** - Georgia
8. **Melissa Fairey** - Canada
9. **Dalia Grinfeld** - Germany
10. **Astrid Hamberger** - Romania
11. **Hanife Kardelen IŞik** - Turkey
12. **Lander Islami** – Kosovo\*
13. **Constanze Jeitler** - Austria
14. **Lilit Karapetyan** - Armenia
15. **Jonathan Karstadt** - United Kingdom
16. **Jekaterina Kirjuhina** - Latvia
17. **Milos Kovacevic** – Bosnia and Herzegovina
18. **Corinna Krauß** - Germany
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20. **Dachi Lepsveridze** - Georgia
21. **Jonathan Otto** - Denmark
22. **Artemis Papatheoderou** - Greece
23. **Gabriel Rosenberg** - Sweden
24. **Nuno SÁ Lemos Sotto-Mayor Loureiro** – Portugal/Belgium
25. **Samad-zada Javid** - Azerbaijan
26. **Orkhan Sharifli** - Azerbaijan
27. **Yana Snizhko** - Belarus
28. **Bojan Stojkovski** – Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
29. **Ráchel Surányi** - Hungary
30. **Federica Sustersic** - Italy
31. **Cristina Turcu** - Moldova
32. **Viktoryia Vaitovich** - Belarus
33. **Gorana Vujovic** - Montenegro
34. **Liliia Zviagintceva** – Russian Federation
35. **Ismael Cortés Gomez** – Spain
36. **Natalia Duminica** - Moldova
37. **László Farkas** – Hungary
38. **Tibor Jóni** - Hungary

\* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/99 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.



39. **Jelena Savic** - Serbia
40. **Simona Torotcoi** - Romania
41. **Sehrish Amjad** - Canada
42. **Hajar el Jahidi** - Canada
43. **Nour Ibrahim** - Romania
44. **Bouchallikht Kauthar** - the Netherlands
45. **Furkan Senel** - Belgium
46. **Rahma Sghaier** - Tunisia/Italy
47. **Dani Yacoub** - Syria/Germany
48. **Alina Bricman** – Romania
49. **Anikó Félix** – Hungary
50. **Ivona Gacevic** - Serbia
51. **Dávid Magassy** - Hungary
52. **Borbála Pál** - Hungary
53. **Ofer Rosenblat** – Romania







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