

G20i FYF, 8 Oct 2020
Working Group 1

Rapporteur Notes

· Challenge 1 – Capacity and tools to identify, address, and prevent hate speech

Recommendation 1: Education authorities should prioritize the introduction of modules on digital literacy into school and further education curricula. People who lack the skills to navigate online platforms and analyze online sources critically are left vulnerable to the prevailing “infodemic”. Skills can also be fostered via informal means, such as games.

Recommendation 2: Social media platforms should sharpen and either unify or harmonize their definitions and policies concerning hate speech. They should use their platforms and their respective influencers to promote digital literacy and responsible posting.

Recommendation 3: Funding should be provided for opportunities for public-private partnerships to prevent spread of hate speech and encourage encounters. Many young people lack practical knowledge about other faiths but asking questions can draw the suspicion that the person asking might be considering conversion; therefore public-private initiatives are invited to create safe online spaces for youth from different faiths to meet and ask questions without stigma.

· Challenge 2 – Hate speech versus freedom of speech

Recommendation 1: Equal application of legal measures: Objective analysis of derogatory speech and how it affects religions should be conducted on a national basis. Responses and policies should be applied equally, regardless of whether a majority or minority faith is affected.

Recommendation 2: Awareness-raising: We need to make people more sensitive to the reality of hate speech and its consequences. Young people should be encouraged and empowered to spread awareness of the profound negative psychological effects it can have.

Recommendation 3: Religious teachers/community leaders should complete mandatory training which includes awareness of other faiths and how to spread positive and responsible messages in their teaching, avoiding messages of hate.

Recommendation 4. Education: curricula should be introduced which robustly cover hate speech and responsible use of social media. Foster dialogue skills and practice: educators for every age group should focus on building the capacity to hold sensitive, difficult dialogues and to manage grievances and differences constructively. Encourage empathy-driven education both in schools and informally which allows for direct encounter between members of different social groups.

· Challenge 3 – Countering hate speech in political discourses

Recommendation 1: A compulsory course on responsible public communication should be introduced for anyone assuming public office. Introduce and/or consistently enforce legal measures to penalize public figures whose words infringe upon human rights and the rights of minorities.

Recommendation 2: States should be empowered to reduce the minimum age to run for office to better represent demographic shifts nationally. Only 2% of parliamentarians are under 30. This change would have an impact upon political discourse that is more representative of young people's aspirations to inherit more just societies. It will also inspire more women to get involved in politics and ensure violence and hate are addressed differently.

Recommendation 3: States should refrain from weaponizing digital media platforms under national security laws and prevent peaceful freedom of expression. Knowing the influence they wield, social media should take measures to ensure that they remain politically neutral and as free from political manipulation as possible.

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