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| **Working Group on Communication Strategies and Practices**  **SUMMARY** |
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| **AAEAAQAAAAAAAAVEAAAAJDZlYmYzZGUxLWE1M2QtNGFjZi1iMzhhLWMwNDI3YTYyZDExOA** |
| ***Date***: 6 November 2017  ***Meeting*** ***venue***: Grand Hotel Continental  ***Address***: Calea Victoriei 56, București 010083, Romania  ***Moderators***: Katrine Pettersen and Sarah Cooke O’Dowd  ***Summary:*** Mathew Augusteyns |
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**AGENDA**

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| **Monday, 6 November: Working Group Meeting** | |
| 9:00 – 9:30 | **Welcome**   * *Csaba Ferenc Asztalos,* President, National Council for Combatting Discrimination, Romania * *Katrine Gaustad Pettersen,* Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud, Norway & Working Group Moderator |
| 09:30 – 12:30 | **Communicating on Values for Equality Bodies – Lecture, Group Discussion & Workshop**  Following our 2012 publication ‘[Valuing Equality](http://www.equineteurope.org/Using-values-to-create-a-more)’, we have now developed a practical communication toolkit, ‘[Framing Equality](http://www.equineteurope.org/Framing-Equality-Communication-Toolkit-for-Equality-Bodies)’, to identify ways in which we could craft our communication to create sustainable social change. This will be briefly presented to you so that we are all on the same page for the discussions, but please familiarise yourselves with both in advance.  For the group discussion, please consider the following questions, as regards the promotion of your equality body in general:   * What are your vision and goals? What outcome are you looking for? * Who is your audience and what do you want to tell them? * What do you want to say? (Problem/solution/motivation)   For the Workshop, we will focus mainly on developing the exercises in Framing Equality’s Chapter 3: Creating Frames. By the end of the session, we’d like to have developed written texts that we can pass around and use in the future for our promotion work. |
|  | **Coffee break at 10:30** |
| 12:30 – 14:00 | **Lunch break** |
| 14:00-14:45 | **Campaign against discrimination on pregnancy and family leave**   * *Päivi Ojanperä,* Ombudsman for Equality, Finland   The Finnish Ombudsman for Equality ran a campaign combating discrimination on pregnancy and family leave in October. Päivi will present the campaign, as well as her learnings from its implementation. |
| 14:45 – 15:10 | **2018 planning**   * FRA Seminar with human rights leadership communicators – 23-24 January 2018 * What topics would you like to discuss in 2018? * Any experts that you would like to have speak at our meetings? * Concrete ideas for the seminar on hate speech (to be held after the summer)? Ie. Speakers, examples from equality bodies… |
| 15:10 – 15:15 | Summary of meeting and close |

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

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**SUMMARY – WG Communication Meeting**

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| **1. Welcome** |

After a brief welcome by WG Moderator Katrine G. Pettersen, Csaba Ferenc Asztalos, President of the National Council for Combatting Discrimination, introduced the Romanian NEB and elaborated on its communication activities. The National Council for Combatting Discrimination was established with the accession to the European Union, under foreign pressure and without the full support of the Romanian Parliament.

There are a number of challenges related to the field of communication, more often than not pertaining to legislation. Their primary communication tool is maintaining and updating a database of stakeholders which they use to disseminate information, as well as to lobby for resources. In addition, they utilise social media along with analysing existing (external) social media covering particular issues. The issues that are high on the current agenda of the National Council are hate speech and fake news.

Furthermore, they also focus on ‘internal or domestic’ communication. The activities of the regional offices are more centred on awareness raising and prevention mechanisms. The head office is more concentrated on change (especially related to legislation), among other things. Mr Asztalos advises that in Romania, the public and institutions should learn to enter into dialogue and talk about sensitive issues, without jeopardizing the mandates of others. One of the main accomplishments of the National Council is that they acquired the privilege to speak up and give advice to courts before judges give a ruling. In this regard, Mr Asztalos asserts the importance that trainings are given to lawyers and judges (and other key actors), by qualified communication experts instead of legal experts who are specialised in communication.

The first step that Mr Asztalos made after taking up office was setting up an internal evaluation of the values of his employees. He wanted to establish whether everyone in the equality body is ‘valuing’ in the same direction/with the same vision, but also whether they have or use the same definition for e.g. discrimination and equality. This was part of his internal strategy – as primary communicator in the capacity of president as well as having recognised communication as one of the core areas to invest in – in addition to the institution’s external strategy. Following this, Mr Asztalos formed the communication department. Some of the tasks of the department include: maintaining and utilising their database of external stakeholders for information dissemination, press monitoring to demonstrate that there are issues related to discrimination and equality which are very relevant and topical (journalists, for example, are still regrettably placing too much emphasis on political issues).

One of their core communication strategies is ‘quick reaction’, which is closely related to crisis management. What he finds most difficult in any communication strategy, is influencing how other actors communicate on certain decisions (e.g. a court loss). Lastly: he aims for the institution to be visible and respected for being efficient, and definitely not out of popularity considerations. On a side note, the president of the Romanian NEB is Hungarian, which makes it interesting for him to experience communication in a multifaceted way.

Ana Tretinjak suggests a topic for the next WG communication meeting. She would like to discuss and collect good examples, practices and mechanisms from other WG members for gathering victims testimonies for media use, which she believes are necessary in order to communicate successfully.

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| **2. Communicating on Values for Equality Bodies** |

Katrine Pettersen referred to the quote by Antoine de-Saint Exupery:

“If you want to build a ship, don’t herd people together to collect wood and don’t assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea.”

According to Katrine, this is something we do too little of. We should determine what our visions and goals are. She continues with the tweet of Barack Obama (which is actually a quote by Nelson Mandela):

“No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin or his background or his religion..."

Sometimes communicating messages or values can be done simply in a warm way, yet still be very effective. The message above was tweeted following the white supremacy clashes in the United States. It being the most liked tweet ever, goes to show that values based communication is extremely important, especially in times of crisis. Perhaps equally impactful is utilising pictures to connect (or bond) with people, like the former president did in his tweet. He dares it to be warm and closer towards his audience, to use simpler words, to be more personal and easy in his communication and to imply change (no one is born that way, so you can change towards the better).

Sarah Cooke O’Dowd then explores the lessons we can draw from the toolkit on framing equality and communicating values.

We want to work towards and promote the values that belong to the ‘openness to change’ and ‘self-transcendence’ value axes. Researchers have found a set of values that recur across cultures (see values map in the ‘Valuing Equality’ publication). Almost everyone values each of these and self-transcendence values are scored most highly across Europe. When people strongly hold self-transcendent and openness to change values, they tend to be less discriminatory. These values are not static; they can be engaged, strengthened and promoted. We can actively work to bring to the fore the sense of respect and care for others that every person already holds within themselves.

An example regarding framing is “My new job is like… being back at school.” This can imply different things according to different frames: did you get bullied, did you have to study a lot, did you make many friends, etc.

It is important to understand your framing and your intended framing. What is your vision and goals? Who is your audience? How are you going to frame your message in order to motivate them towards our vision? Important to note is that the goals are the smaller steps you need to take in order to achieve the long-term vision. It is important to identify these and make sure they are small enough that they become attainable (and perhaps measurable) in the short term, so that progress becomes tangible and realistic.

The toolkit continues with how to go about creating your frame:

1. **Speak to people’s best self**: appealing to the values of people’s better selves can significantly reduce people’s prejudice.

2. **Create common ground**: the sense of being part of the same ‘group’ helps people to emphathise and support each other. E.g.: by expressing shared values and using trusted messengers (such as midwives who gave advice and promoted the EHRC’s Power to the Bump campaign to empower women to speak out against pregnancy discrimination in the workplace).

3. **Talk about change**: people are more motivated if they can see a way to change the situation as well as their own role in the change.

4. **Make it real**: use powerful images; give your message a human face.

5. **Avoid reinforcing unhelpful frames**: directly responding to something by saying x isn’t true, simply reinforces x in someone’s mind. Focus instead on upbeat and positive stories, and engage values that belong to the openness to change and self-transcendence axes.

An example is given by Päivi Ojanperä with the Finnish “Not in our school” campaign which focused on how a school could be without sexual harassment. It lead with vision, rather than the problem. It was about the school as a ‘group’ (‘our school’). It is simple and concrete (‘not in our school’ rather than e.g. ‘no discrimination in my school’), cool (usage of curse words to relate to the students), no registration necessary, posters were given a human face, etc.

After creating a frame, it is important to (a) test your communication, (b) measure the impact and (c) monitor and evaluate the achievements of your framing.

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| **3. Group discussion: our common vision for NEBs communication?** |

The workshop focused mainly on developing the exercises in Framing Equality’s Chapter 3: Creating Frames. The objective was to develop written texts for us to share and use in the promotion of the equality body.

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| What are your visions and goals? What outcome are you looking for? |
| Visions:   * Raise awareness on the existence of our organisations and on discrimination issues * An equal society * Empowered citizens * Human rights respected, also in action * Embedded in rule of law * Freedom to be yourself * A society that values its citizens * Equal opportunities and equal rights * Justice as a value * A society that does not stereotype and holds no prejudices   Outcomes (the goals that are needed to reach that vision):   * A society that protects its citizens * The three P’s: prevention, protection and prosecution (as strengthening mechanism) * Use of positive language * People that are informed enough to identify discrimination and inequality * Make people and institutions conscious of human rights. This is linked to raising awareness, by focusing on communication, and by humanizing (‘putting a human face on it’), etc. It occurs too often that people are normalised to bad things, which we should continue to avoid from happening. * Build trust * Show and make people believe that change is possible. * Make discrimination relevant (“it can happen to you but also to someone that you care about’), recognisable (by asking specific questions, some Roma individuals for example, do not admit to being discriminated until you ask them about specifics, e.g.: “what happens when you go to the store?”), and ‘sexy’ to people. * Mainstreaming: by making people realise that it’s a shared responsibility. |

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| Who is your audience and what do you want to tell them? | |
| Supporters:   * NGOs * Human rights journalists * Universities/researchers * (Friendly) politicians, parliamentarians, well known people sharing the same values * International networks * Unions/associations * Church | Affected:   * Institutions, companies, etc. * Minorities: migrants, LGBTI, etc. We all grow old, we all were young… * Everyone! |
| Influencers:   * (Friendly) politicians that share the same values * International networks * Decision makers * (Social) media * Courts * Hate groups * Populists * Unions/associations * The police * Teachers * Public sector | Opposers:   * Hate groups * Populists * Some Politicians * Some NGOs * The extreme right * Social media/fake media * Companies * Church |

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| What do you want to say? |
| * Problem: get agreement that there is a problem and what it is * Solution: get agreement that there is a solution and what it is * Motivation: show why the audience should care and act |

**Taboo:**

In order for us to develop a thinking on how to explain things in a simple way, the working group played a game of ‘Taboo’. A huge success among participants, both in terms of networking and enjoyment, as well as fulfilling the objective of the game. Participants realised that the terms we use on a daily basis in our profession are not easy to convey to the general public in a way that is conducive to our cause. Abstract terms such as equality as well as feelings were far harder to describe or explain in a simple way.

**Group exercise**

Katrine Pettersen organised participants in four groups to develop their thinking on two exercises.

* **Exercise 1: Create a new frame for the story about equality bodies**

Examples are given of how many of us present our equality bodies and our mandate to the world today. Think about the group discussion and the things you have learned from reading the toolkit, and discuss whether it is possible to frame stories about equality bodies differently, by using more value based communication. Use PIRCs five framing principles (pg. 38) and try to write a new story about what an equality body is, and what they work for.

* **Exercise 2: Create messages for a mini campaign, a press release or a Facebook post based on a specific topic**

Your equality body wants to make a statement in the media/social media or make a small campaign against e.g. (sexual) harassment, hate speech, age discrimination or any other topic. Use PIRCs guidelines on (page 19) to help the group agree on the framing task, and PIRCs framing principles (on page 38) to help you frame your message. What would your most important message be? Which quotes would you include? How would you frame it?

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| Group 1 – **Create a new frame for the story about equality bodies** |

First and foremost, the name of the NEB is very important. It is our calling card to the general public. and yet some NEBs have names that are not particularly inspiring. Also important is to pay attention to positive framing. Instead of using ‘anti’, we can focus on what we want, e.g.: some religious groups say they are pro-life instead of anti-abortion.

A balance should be struck between the communication style of Barack Obama and our lawyer colleagues. How would you describe equality, non-discrimination, your visions and goals, to a friend, a child, a teenager, etc.?

Should we use a values based communication approach using values that are shown by the opposition (such as power/achievement and tradition/ancestors) when talking to the opposers? However, we can argue that tradition is both positive (conducive to creating a common ground) and negative (fostering a we/them narrative, with them threatening our long-standing values).

The group’s discussion led to the following (incomplete) statement:

“We work towards a world, where you and everyone around you, are entitled to certain rights (*create a common ground by listing those rights*) which can and must be respected. We and you can make a difference towards a society which is fair, free and just. We believe that everyone is born equal. It is our job, mission and duty to protect and promote equality and anti-discrimination. We are all empowered to make change happen.”

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| Group 2 – Mini campaign: To encourage a positive approach 45+ in the workplace |

**Group 2** opted for exercise 2: create messages for a mini campaign, a press release or a Facebook post based on a specific topic.

The **topic** is (older) age discrimination in the area of work and employment. This would be communicated through video for both television and social media of approximately 30 seconds in length. The setting is a hotel that employs 45+ years old workers. The video features a woman that is 48 years old, working at the hotel reception desk. She is shown doing her daily tasks, edited in short frames, in order to display the range of her responsibilities and skills as well as the workload. In brief segments, we see her interacting with the hotel guests, which consists of a diverse group of people: a child, a hipster, an elderly person and a business man. In the following scene, the woman says: “I love my job!” Her colleagues say: “She’s so great with people, and speaks 4 languages!” A trainee says: “She has taught me more than I expected – you should see her handle unexpected situations”. Three guests (separately) say “thank you” to her at the reception. In the scene that follows, her colleague is featured again, saying that “She’s certainly more than a number.” In the closing scene, the woman says “My age won’t do my job, my knowledge and experience will.” The hashtag #MoreThanANumber” is seen throughout the video.

The message that needs to be conveyed is the added benefit of employing older workers. The desired **outcome** would then be less unemployed people over the age of 45. The **audience** which is aimed to be influenced by the video, are companies and more. We want to tell the audience; employers (HR staff, CEO’s, entrepreneurs) and decision makers (for improvement of policies), that there are many benefits to having 45+ years old staff members. The **barriers** are persisting stereotypes. To overcome these barriers; show that they are real people, who are willing to work, and who – as experienced workers – will have positive effects on the company (and its business results) and on the team. Important to keep in mind when developing a message in this context, is not to encourage discrimination of young people when showcasing the experience that older people have.

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| Group 3 – Mini campaign: Combatting Sexual harassment |

Our vision: A society without sexual harassment

Our message: “You can say no” and “Sexual harassment is not ok”

Our audience: Women in general, but also employers and secondary level students.

In order to develop a media and social media campaign, we would develop photos or images in the workplace and in school that show typical situations where girls/women are sexually harassed. While they should all be very powerful in their own right, the ones developed for schools should more clearly show what ‘sexual harassment’ means, as teenagers might not understand the meaning of the words. Each photo would be linked to the hashtag #YouCanSayNo.

When looking for a more developed message for each group of photos, we wondered how to create an easy to understand, values based message. We thought about:

Sexual harassment is: not ok **/ illegal / a crime / not sexy /** wrong. We thought that some of these messages highlighted the wrong values (in bold), so we decided to go with “Sexual harassment is not ok”.

**Message to women in general:** Sexual harassment is not ok. Say no and report it to… (add number of gender helpline or equality body number)

**Message to employers:** Sexual harassment is not ok. Make your workplace a safe place for all. Contact your equality body for more information.

**Message to students:** Sexual harassment is not cool. Don’t make place for it in school. Respect each other! Contact your equality body for more information.

This campaign would raise awareness about:

* Problem: sexual harassment exists and this is what it looks like
* Solution: How to deal with sexual harassment as a victim, as an employer, or as a fellow student
* Motivation: Sexual harassment shouldn’t be in our societies. Inform yourself about what it is, how to deal with it and make sure to respect you colleagues/employees/classmates

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| Group 4 – Mini campaign: Combatting Hate Speech |

Group 4 decided to develop an idea for a mini-campaign on the topic of hate speech. Our idea was to prepare a video campaign, accompanied by Twitter talks and hashtags that would relate to it.

**Campaign**: The idea was to relativize the environment in which hate speech is taken for granted, and co-creates conformity. It is important to raise awareness on hate speech and to make it perceived as something that should not be a part of 21st century society. The main roles in our campaign would be given to the children and teenagers, as they are the representatives of the new era.

Since we decided to make a video campaign, we had to develop the scenarios for the videos. The vision was to create video clips, in which representatives of older generations (parents, grandparents) would be faced with the critique of their youngsters in terms of letting the hate speech be a part of our lives. For example, there would be a man and a child sitting on a couch watching TV. On the television, a certain politician would be speaking badly about someone or a group of people – i.e. hate speech. While the older person would take the program for granted and not doubt the legitimacy of such words or actions, the child or teenager will speak up, question the statements and discuss with the older person. This will create two diametrically-different poles – an individual, already sucked into society as it is and therefore full of stereotypes him/herself, and a child/teenager who is still possesses some innocence and is not familiar with any discriminatory matters yet. The end of the video would reveal that the child/teenager is actually the older person him/herself when he/she was young, also displaying the hashtag #whathappened.

More videos like this would be made. It is of extreme importance that each of them would illustrate an everyday life situation (e.g. public transport, park, shopping mall, school, concert etc.), so that everyone would be able to identify themselves with it. The whole campaign would target a large audience – not only the older generations, but also children and teenagers who would then be able to recognize good role models among the children in the campaign.

1. **Speak to people’s best self** – this is why the children and teenagers would be used. People perceive them as innocent, and if you appeal to everyone’s inner child or them when they were young, they can feel their own innocence again as well.

2. **Create common ground** – common ground will be created by recreating everyday life situations in which everybody will be able to recognize themselves.

3. **Talk** **about change** – the #whathappened is actually referring directly to change. What has happened that you’ve changed so much while growing up? Seeing your younger self thinking differently – would you be willing to change that? How would you do it?

4. **Make** **it real** – we believe the projection of the inner child or the younger self is a very powerful image already by itself. It makes everyone rethink their positioning.

5. **Avoid reinforcing unhelpful frames** – one of the perks of this campaign is that it is targeting each and every individual, not in relation to anyone else.

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| **4. Campaign against discrimination on pregnancy and family leave** |

Päivi Ojanperä presented a campaign by the Finnish Ombudsman for Equality, that took place in October, on combating discrimination on pregnancy and family leave. Päivi presented the campaign, as well as her learnings from its implementation. The Ombudsman for Equality only deals with gender issues and they predominantly deal with pregnancy discrimination as that is most reported.

The **vision** of the campaign was to achieve zero-tolerance for pregnancy discrimination; every workplace needs to include this objective in their equality policy. The **goals/framing tasks** revolved around the following:

* **Problem**: getting agreement in the public discussion that pregnancy discrimination is a huge problem in Finland. They found that people are not well informed and vice versa. The assumption is that the cases that come through are just the tip of the iceberg. Many people are still not inclined to report the discrimination.
* **Solution**: getting agreement around the solution; i.e. creating and enforcing the common opinion with the messengers (i.a. trade unions) that pregnancy discrimination needs to stop; raise knowledge and awareness about pregnancy discrimination.
* **Motivation**: inspiring support or action; when discriminated against: don’t suffer alone, get legal advice, you can get justice; encourage women to contact the Finnish NEB

The campaign targeted an **audience** of women (ages 20-45) who are discriminated against. It approaches the audience using the aforementioned framing tasks:

* **Problem**: there is a lack of knowledge about what discrimination is, the rights involved and what can be done. Also present are feelings of pessimism and fear; e.g. the stigma surrounding it is high in smaller towns, which creates the fear of not landing a job elsewhere for being seen as a difficult person for reporting the discrimination.
* **Solution**: offering advice (also anonymously); trade unions can help; informing about the rights and how to act.
* **Motivation**: empower the audience using examples in the media (success stories: “Someone had to be the brave one); and showing them that they are not alone in this matter.

Important in the campaign was to **take into consideration the existing beliefs,** which in this case were i.a.: strong beliefs that the labour cost of the pregnant employee is enormously expensive; that employers have an understandable ‘right’ to end the contract when learning about the pregnancy or family leave; that the state should be the one paying (which also fosters opposition, not only coming from the employers but also the state); that is too difficult to solve, etc.

The campaign also allowed for cooperation with the trade unions, defined as **messengers** which are trusted by the audience. It is found that 46% of trade unions get inquiries about pregnancy and family leave on a weekly basis.

While creating frames, it is also crucial to **create common ground**. For the Finnish campaign, this was accomplished by:

* Using trusted messengers, i.e. asking the trade unions to join us.
* Providing recognisable and friendly campaign materials.
* Creating a community of support which provided supportive guidance and information.

The campaign consisted of posters and a video (“Pregnancy discrimination is no child’s play”, picturing a girl holding up two dolls), which ran for 20 days during October 2017, on Facebook, Twitter and Twitter chat, Youtube, Instagram, movie theatres nationwide, television, which made for a huge presence in the media, with social media being the biggest platform.

The preliminary **results** of the campaign as of November 2017 are as follows:

* Increased cooperation with the trade unions, who promoted our messages on their social media.
* The media’s interest was very high and much more than anticipated: it had the right momentum, due to many previous discussions (and agreement) on the need to reorganise the family leave system. The media condemns pregnancy discrimination.
* #raskaussyrjintä was the second highest trending topic in Finland, implying that the public opinon condemns pregancy discrimination.

Also:

* Employers unions got angry about the campaign, because they were not invited to contribute.
* The new campaign will be about good employers: highlighting and reinforcing good practices of employers and the right attitude by examples (from different sectors). E.g.: in order to ‘speak to their best self’, the employers were given a checklist.
* Positive vibes and showcases: videos presenting solutions and great practices to follow (giving an active role to target audiences). E.g.: the video that was used in the campaign shows a girl playing with dolls, a play on words and a good amount of humour (focus on positive framing over negative framing).
* Focus on locating change at the local level (i.e. workplace).

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| **5. Plans for 2018** |

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| Work Plan 2018: WG Communication |

* Organise thematic meetings on topical communication challenges to be presented by an expert (internal or external depending on the topic). The group will get to ask questions, identify the values-based messages and work together to develop responses to the challenges.
* Following on from 2017 work on values and combating online negativity, the Working Group will have a practical session on how to combat hate through positive narratives.
* Develop recommendations on how to set the agenda on equality and non-discrimination during campaigning periods in the run up to elections.
* Support the organisation of the Seminar on Hate Speech from the point of view of Equality Bodies

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| Work Plan 2018: Hate Speech Seminar |

1 ½ day capacity-building seminar which aims to discuss what the issues surrounding hate speech are for equality bodies. It will provide practical solutions from a legal, policy and communication perspective. The seminar will explore how to deal with hate speech in the following ways:

* Understanding: Research and data collection help us to better identify the main issues on hate speech in our context, including who carries it out and on what grounds;
* Prevention: Embedding the practice of equality inside organisations via their systems, communication and policies, including training and recommendations for educators, media and policy makers;
* Management: Legal, policy and communication approaches on how to handle hate speech.

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| Our Work in 2018 |

How can we do things better next year?

* **What topics would you like to discuss in 2018?** Among other things, continuing our work on values based messages. Because there are European elections in 2019 and many general elections in EU MS (and all NEBs go through this), we will be developing recommendations on how to set the agenda on equality and non-discrimination during campaign periods. Another topic that can also be included is how to balance NHRIs’ work on human rights and the equality dimensions through effective communication strategies *(In view of the changes that Malta’s National Commission for the Promotion of Equality will have once its remit will be widened to become a Human Rights and Equality Commission)*
* Any experts that you would like to have speak at our meetings? We would like to collect ideas on **speakers** at our next meeting at the latest.
* The autumn WG meeting could be combined with the hate speech seminar, extending the seminar to two days (**up for decision**).
* Concrete ideas/NEB good practices for the seminar on hate speech (to be held after the summer)?
* **New Equinet website** to be developed in 2018: any advice?
  + Enhancing the user-friendliness of the website to be better able to navigate through different tabs and information.
  + In the section of ‘News’ on the right-hand side there could be the list of years and months so that the user would be able to filter the news more easily, and/or it can be subdived into topics instead.
  + A factsheet on developments on equality in each European country can also be included.

Save the date: 23-24 January 2018: **FRA Seminar with human rights leadership communicators**.