

Background

On 1 May, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights issued a request to seek the views of ‘relevant stakeholders’ on the World Programme for Human Rights Education, adopted on 6 October 2022.

The purpose of this briefing is to suggest that the fifth phase includes a thematic focus on **access to digital education for multi-stakeholder communities of practice on human rights**. It also suggests that **a particular focus is placed on communities of practice that have responsibility for and are committed to understanding and addressing hate crime and hate speech**.

About Facing Facts

Facing Facts is coordinated by CEJI—a Jewish contribution to an inclusive Europe and works across communities and institutions to transform understandings of and responses to hate crime and hate speech for the benefit of victims, communities and broader society.

Our overall objectives are:

- To promote victim and outcome-focused practice that increases access to justice, support and safety;
- To generate collaborative responses to the problem of hate crime and hate speech;
- To support national change agents and anti-hate crime and hate speech communities of practice;
- To develop and ensure access to cutting-edge and collaborative learning and capacity building on hate crime and hate speech, particularly in the online space.

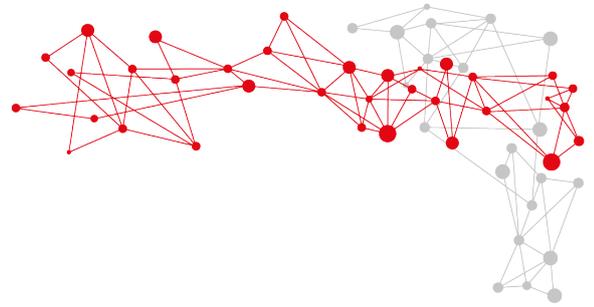
About CEJI-A Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe

Since 1991, CEJI has made a Jewish contribution to an inclusive Europe, improving anti-discrimination policy and practice through educational approaches in collaboration with people of all backgrounds. CEJI is a European leader in the field of anti-bias training, a key aim and dimension of human rights education.

Facing Facts and online human rights education

Positive human rights outcomes require strong human rights response systems at the national level. The strength of the system relies on effective laws, policies, training and cooperation across institutional boundaries and with specialist civil society organisations. Facing Facts creates effective online learning programmes to support the development of such systems and communities of practice. To date, over 5,000 learners have registered on [Facing Facts Online](#), taking part in over 70 courses.

In December 2022 Facing Facts published a [policy paper](#) outlining gaps and opportunities in research, policy and practice regarding digital learning for police, criminal justice and civil society professionals



specifically in the context of hate crime and hate speech. We concluded that while online learning programmes have grown in recent years, this work has, to a large extent, been undertaken in an empirical and conceptual vacuum. With the exception of one or two studies, empirical research almost exclusively focuses on school and university students, teachers and educators. In 2023-2024 Facing Facts will research the needs and motivations of law enforcement, criminal justice and specialist community support personnel as online learners. The research aims to develop and improve Facing Facts' own online learning programmes and to inform human rights education, policy and practice more generally.

Phase two of the World Programme for Human Rights Education was of particular relevance to Facing Facts because it focuses on the need for effective and strategically grounded human rights training programmes for professionals, including civil servants and law enforcement officials. The identified UN standards that should underpin such trainings, including the ICERD and ICCPR, both contain binding obligations on countering hate crime and hate speech and are of central importance to Facing Facts online trainings.

We were interested to see that the phase two plan of action references 'e-learning' and 'online learning', and recommends that responsible actors,

'Facilitate access to new information technologies for networking, exchange of human rights information and discussion. Develop website resources, develop and facilitate e-learning, online learning programmes, e-forums, web conferencing and distance-learning programmes'

We recommended that the fifth phase thematically builds on phase two in terms of access to digital human rights education for professionals, including civil servants, law enforcement officials and specialist civil society victim support organisations, with a focus on access, quality and collaboration.

The following questions could be considered.

- Access: who is—and who isn't—accessing new information technologies, digital learning programmes, and human rights knowledge exchange platforms? What technical and institutional barriers do they face and how can these be dismantled? How can key target learners be supported to be confident in engaging in and taking full advantage of online learning technology?
- Quality: What are current strengths and gaps in needs assessment, evaluation, learning design methodologies? How can promising practice be better shared and adapted?
- Collaboration: How can new information technologies, online learning programmes, e-forums, web conferencing and distance-learning programmes best support and strengthen communities of practice in human rights education across institutional and community boundaries, nationally and internationally?

Finally, hate crime and hate speech are major and globally pervasive human right violations, causing lasting harm and imposing specific duties on law enforcement and criminal justice duty bearers to



ensure effective investigations and remedies. Facing Facts has been working with online tools and collaborative methods that aim to support national stakeholders to co-describe diverse national hate crime and hate speech response systems in terms of legal frameworks, available data, policy and training and victim support; co-diagnose national strengths and weaknesses; and, co-prioritise actions for improvement. We have shown that information technologies and digital learning can support diverse communities of practice to strengthen shared understandings of national hate crime and hate speech response systems and agree collaborative actions for improvement. We see these methods as fundamental to delivering on the UN's Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech and a fruitful focus for phase five of the World Programme for Human Rights Education.

For any questions, please contact Facing Facts Director, Melissa Sonnino at melissa.sonnino@ceji.org

