

Réunion de l'OSCE sur la Relation entre la Propagande raciste, xénophobe et antisémite sur Internet et les crimes inspirés par la haine

Séance 4 : Promotion de la tolérance sur et grâce à Internet – Meilleures pratiques visant à éduquer les utilisateurs et à sensibiliser davantage l'opinion publique

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Thank you Mr. Chairman.

We wish to thank the French government and the Bulgarian Chairmanship for the organization of this conference.

The last two days we have been focusing only on websites propagating hate speech. However Internet is being used in far more devious and insidious ways to foster hate and discrimination:

- Internet and video games are, according to recent research, having extremely harmful effects on young people's behaviour particularly in regards to one sector of the population, namely women.
- One of the latest finds of the hate-mongers is to install viruses onto highly reputable information dissemination company's servers as a means of disseminating racist and xenophobic news bulletins via email to unwary costumers all over the world.
- As fast as we take down hate sites, new dissemination modes will appear.

In order to overcome the effects of prejudicial content it seems there is only one real solution: education. I would like to offer three recommendations and one model of Best Practice:

1. An extremely comprehensive Code of conduct exists: the Human Rights Charter. The Council of Europe has produced human rights teaching packages on Internet. Such use of Internet should be encouraged as a means of overcoming the harmful effects of racist and xenophobic propaganda.

2. The Council of Europe has produced an Internet literacy handbook for parents and teachers to effectively use the Internet as a learning tool (available at www.coe.int/internet-literacy). It underlines ethical risks of all aspects of Internet, offers Best Practices and useful sites as well as highlighting the educational added value that Internet brings. Moreover it describes the different facets of information literacy that should be taken into consideration to combat the effects of prejudicial content. This handbook could be adapted and promoted to keep step with new needs.

3. Stereotypes are based on social representations, usually built during childhood or adolescence. However, the pedagogical model the most prevalent in schools is what the sociologist Basil Bernstein describes as a `performance model` in which differences are scorned. It would be far more effective to integrate a child-centered approach based on a competency model which use differences between children (and citizens) as a means of creating a culturally enriching environment. In the past, our social representations were built through direct contact with local learning resources. Today they are mainly built through distant resources - advertising, TV, Internet. This calls for new forms of literacy – amongst others greater social and cultural literacy. It is therefore time to rethink literacy and pedagogical models.

Best practice

In Luxembourg we have implemented an Internet awareness campaign as a means of educating citizens to use today`s information and technology tools effectively and positively. The campaign steering committee comprises not only education, family, culture, economy, employment and communication ministries, but also the ISPA and the ASPI.

Actions include the publication of the brochure that has been distributed to participants and is also currently being translated and adapted by the Portuguese culture ministry for dissemination throughout Portugal. Due to popular request, to date some 60,000 copies of the brochure have been disseminated in Luxembourg in three languages: French, German and English. The brochure underlines the importance of critical judgment in regards information searching and offers practical tips and web site addresses. Other awareness products will shortly be produced and disseminated.

Other actions include workshops for parents and teachers showing them how to effectively use Internet both for themselves and with their children and pupils.

We thank you for your attention.