



How to respond to hate speech



A definition

Hate speech involves discriminatory, demeaning, denigrating and dehumanising views expressing intolerance, bigotry, prejudice or bias towards an individual or group.



Why is this important?

History has shown that hatred can have dangerous consequences on people's mental and physical well-being or even survival, especially for marginalised groups who face violence and abuse based on their identity or situation. The [2015 Global Attitudes survey](#) determined that 67% of US citizens believe that people should be allowed to publicly express offensive views towards minority groups, while 40% of Millennials and 49% of Europeans, including 70% of German participants, are in favour of preventing or censoring such speech.



Tips and tricks

- ➔ Acknowledge the terms and conditions of the platform regarding which types of speech are allowed and report offensive posts or comments to the rightful authorities. Refrain from engaging and base your response on factual data and support towards victims.
- ➔ If stalking and other criminal behaviours are being committed, take screenshots and report the evidence to local authorities. Acknowledge national laws and legal boundaries to free speech, which consider certain statements as acts of violence condemnable by law (incitement to discrimination, segregation, negationism, etc.).



Useful resources and tools



UNIA (Belgian institution against discrimination), [“How to deal with hate speech?”](#), provides advice and tips on how to handle discriminatory comments on the internet.



United Nations, [“Engage – how to deal with hate speech?”](#), gives a series of short tips on how to face and respond to hate speech, whether online or offline.



Meghan Moravcik Walbert on Lifehacker, [“Teach your kids how to respond to hate speech online”](#), explains how to identify, report, call out and follow up on hate speech.



Leadership Conference Education Fund, [“Online Hate Speech is Pervasive. Here's How to Start Combating it”](#), gives advice, examples and solutions against online hate.