



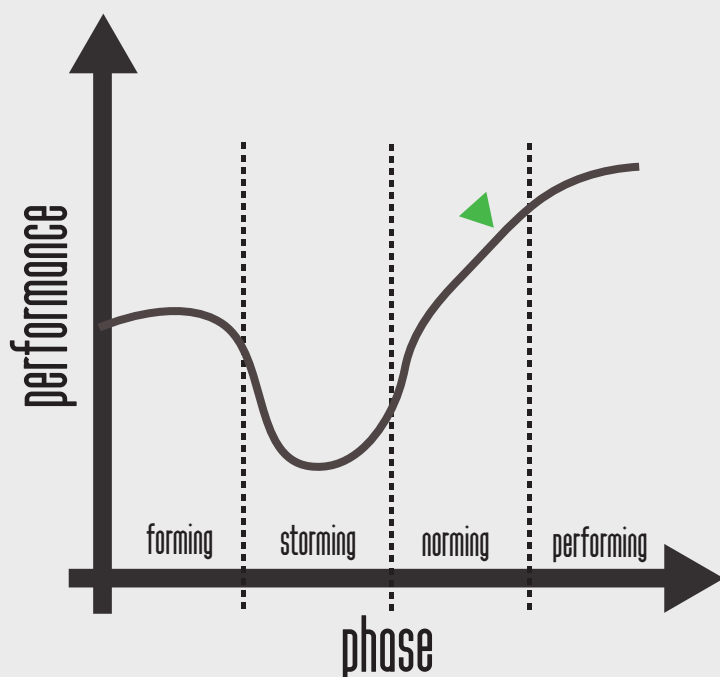
**CAN-LAB**

counter and  
alternative  
narratives  
in action  
with young  
people

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## when to use it?



This activity is designed for the groups of young people, activists, leaders... who want to act against hate speech.

you can start using this activity when the group is ready for it.

### PROCESS-WISE:

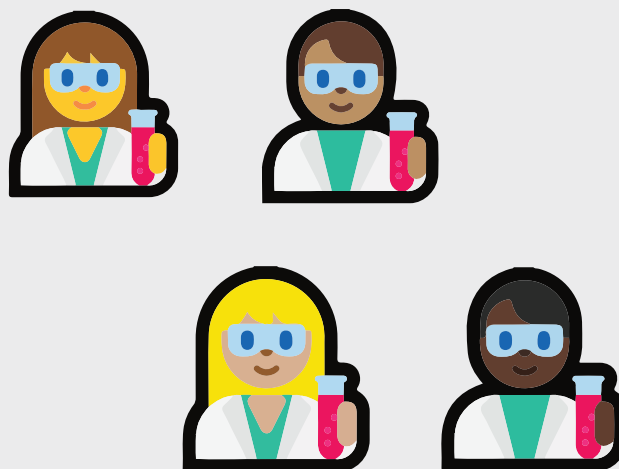
when they are used to each other, their working and learning styles, preferably at the end of the norming phase.

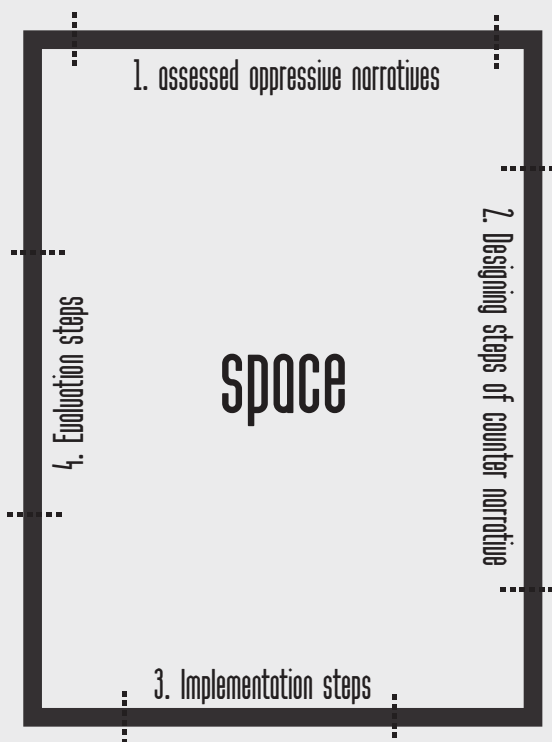
### CONTENT-WISE:

The group also has to have a good understanding of hate speech, how oppressive narratives work, how it affects individuals and society. Participants should already have assessed the oppressive narratives (Step 1 from the manual "WeCAN!")

## space and story

The activity is built on the principles of human rights education and non-formal education. For the learning experience design, it's important to create an encouraging and engaging working atmosphere. We suggest to concentrate on one theme, for example a laboratory. Design the space of the venue in the theme of laboratory, perhaps get white coats for the participants, stimulate senses and focus on the role that the outputs will have on the society.





design the space in a way that it enables the group to visualise what are the steps to accomplish. After each step is fulfilled, put a tick or color it in green, so that participants have the sense of accomplishment and drive to go further.

Alternatively, you can also prepare diaries for the participants to make notes their and document the steps.

## programme

ideally, designing steps take 3 days, however, depending on the size of the groups, readiness and the amount of expert's inputs, it may vary.

It's up to the facilitators to plan the process taylored to the capacities, the needs of the groups and the programme flow.

recapping on the oppressive narrative	target audience where do you feel?	designing
identifying the resources	content and tone	human rights checklist
counter/alternative narratives and goal setting	expert's input	action
snowball on objectives	type of actions realistic chart grouping	Presentations

## recapping on the oppressive narrative

### STEP-BY-STEP

- Introduce the activity to the participants in plenary, tell them that the objective of this activity is to identify the oppressive narrative that we want to counter;
- Ask them to go to the wall and have some time on observing the oppressive narratives chart.
- Let participants know that now's the time to find out the details about the narratives and ask each other the questions and make notes.
- Invite participants back to plenary and sole out the narratives that the group wants to work on.

### PREPARATION:

select the wall, where the oppressive narratives will be visualised. Prepare the chart according to the assessment steps (Step 1 in the Manual "We CAN!"). You can either put the results of the deconstruction yourself or ask participants to do it.

### DEBRIEFING:

- How do you feel?
- What made you decide which narratives to counter?
- Would you feel ok to counter the narratives that are more important for others than you?
- What do you think is important to counter these narratives?

### PREPARATION:

print out the emoji-bank, papers, pencils.

### STEP-BY-STEP

- Introduce the participants the objective of this activity, the idea of this activity is to map the skills and resources present in the group.
- Participants work in duos and interview each other on how they can contribute to the process of countering the oppressive narratives. Tell them that now they are the 'researchers' and it's very important for their research to squeeze out every small detail which can help them.

## identifying the resources

- To make the process a bit more relaxing, ask them to paint the portraits of each other.
- Give 10-15 minutes for the interview;
- Invite participants back to the plenary and let them present;
- While presentation write down everything on the resource-board.

#### DEBRIEFING:

- How do you think these skills can help you?
- How would you use them in the process?
- How do you distribute the human resources into smaller groups?

(introduce "butterfly/bumblebee" principles)

Tell participants that it's also crucial to map the physical resources, bring all the gadgets and equipments at one place to help them visualise.

### counter/alternative narratives and goal setting

#### DEBRIEFING:

debriefing of this activity should allow participants to express their opinions about the selected emancipatory narratives and criticise them.

- What do you think about the emancipatory narrative?
- Do you think it's based on human rights principles?
- Do you think it's realistic?
- Who do you imagine as the principal target group of this narrative?
- Who should be the secondary target group?

If participants in the group wish to change the narratives, you can attempt to either have a consensus or have several narratives.

#### PREPARATION:

flipcharts and markers

#### STEP-BY-STEP:

Explain the participants the objective of this activity and link it with the timeline of CAN-LAB.

The goal is to turn oppressive narrative into an emancipatory narrative: "Now you see this oppressive narrative circulating in the society, imagine a positive narrative that should substitute it, an emancipatory narrative that you would like the society to think about".

Use buzz-groups method to come-up with the emancipatory narratives. Choose 1 or several (depends on the size of the group).

"Making society think this emancipatory narrative is now your goal".

#### PREPARATION:

A4 papers and markers

#### STEP-BY-STEP

Explain the participants that their aim now is to come up with objectives (explain what objective means) which will lead to accomplishment of the goal that was set.

- Divide the participants into smaller groups and give them one A4 paper, explain that maximum 3 objectives can be written on this paper. Give them 15 minutes to come up with the objectives. Allow yourself to go around the groups and give suggestions.
  - Once 15 minutes have passed, merge each two groups together. Give them new A4 paper with the same rule. Now give them 10 minutes.
  - Ask the groups to come together allow them to present the objectives and give time for the consensus for maximum 3 main objectives (per narrative).
- 

### target group Where do you feel?

- Tell participants that they have to put themselves into the shoes of the persona.
- Ask them to make themselves comfortable and silent and ask the guiding questions (allow some time in between for contemplation):
  - What is the age?
  - What is the gender?
  - Imagine your mom, dad.
  - Imagine your home;
  - Who are your friends?

### Snowball on objectives

#### DEBRIEFING:

- How was the process?
- Was it easy or difficult? What made it easy or difficult?
- Do you think the objectives are specific enough?
- How realistic are the objectives?
- Do you think we can achieve them in the time-frame that we have?

#### PREPARATION:

Flipchart papers, markers

#### STEP-BY-STEP

- Explain what "target audience" means.
- Ask participants to brainstorm by what criteria would they group their target audience - what profile, background or characteristics.
- Ask them to think about which criteria fits the objectives the best.
- Ask them to brainstorm about the profile of the target audience - this means characterising the target audience by a single persona. Visualise by writing on the flipchart.
- Ask the participants to pick one persona from the brainstorming that they would like to explore further.

-Imagine waking up, having breakfast, going to work or school.

-Who do you trust?

-Who do you distrust?

-What do you like?

-What makes you laugh?

-What do you believe?

-Who do you believe?

-What makes you angry?

-What makes you insecure?

-What makes you hopeful?

-What do you dislike?

-What do you think about the future?

...

- Now ask the participants to align themselves in one line. Tell them that this is the exercise about the emotions.

- They will have to react on the statements based on how emotional they feel about it. If they feel very emotional they go to the other side of the room. If they feel a bit emotional they may walk half-way, if they have no emotion, they remain on the same line. Flexibility is allowed.

- After they are aligned according to the emotions, they will have to express themselves if they are touched by the facilitator.

- Exit the exercise in a way that participants can exit their role and come back to themselves. Raindrop energiser recommended.

#### STATEMENTS:

Choose the statements from the previous sessions, repeat some of the statements that the participants have been brainstorming on counter and alternative narratives. Touch the sensitive topics. While participants express, ask them follow-up questions.

#### DEBRIEFING:

- How do you feel?

- Was it easy to imagine the persona?

- What helped you with your imagination?

- What made you choose this persona?

- Do you think parallels can be made to your realities?

- What kind of emotions should your narratives provoke in these personnas?

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#### PREPARATION:

Flipchart papers, A4 papers, colorful markers, sticky tape.

#### STEP-BY-STEP

- Explain what is meant by content and tone, tell participants that specific target audience is targeted with complementary content and tone.

- Give examples.

- Explain how "Silent Floor" works.

- Ask participants to work in silence (some chilling music might help).

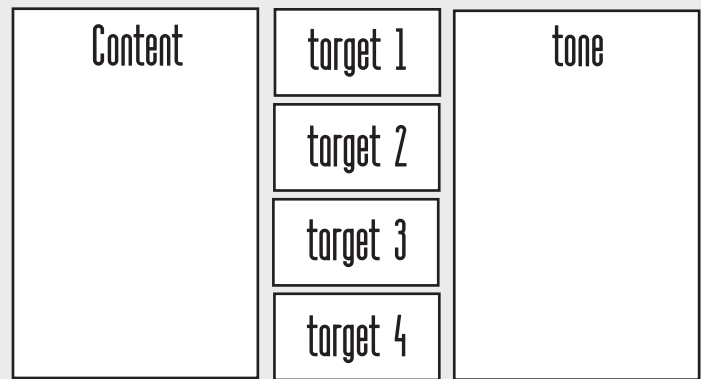
Content  
and tone

- Arrange the flip charts in a way that is shown here.

- Ask participants to brainstorm about content and tone and to write down on the flipcharts.

- Encourage them to read what others wrote and to react to them as well.

- Allocate 15-20 minutes for that;
- Give participants a minute to have a final look on the papers and then ask them to continue silently making links between the "Content," "target group," and "tone" by drawing the lines. Give 5 minutes for that.
- Once done, read out all the links together.



#### DEBRIEFING:

- Why do you think it is important to make links between content, target and tone?
- Can you give examples of the content and tone for the successful or unsuccessful counter and alternative narratives from the past?

- Do you already have some ideas of what could be your counter and alternative narratives?

## Expert's inputs

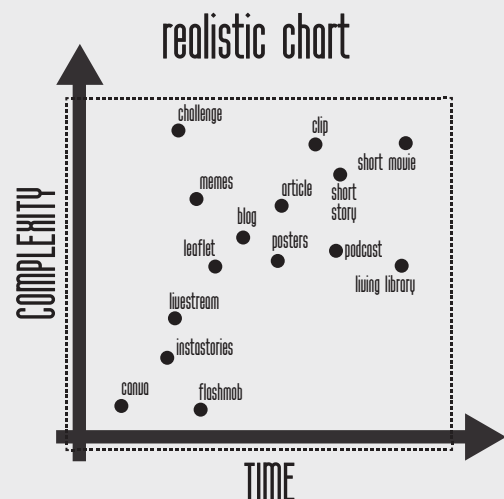
Good inputs are never enough. Invite experts on the topics that can help the participants to create good outputs.

Here are some suggestions:

1. Media literacy;
2. Cases and practices of counter and alternative narratives;
3. Social media;
4. Offline campaigning;
5. Living library;
6. Factchecking;
7. Video-shooting and editing;
8. Photography;
9. Making visuals;
10. Animation;
11. Policy window and advocacy;
- ...

## types of actions

explain that it's important to choose realistic types of actions while having time limit and available resources in mind. This chart is based on the experience of a single individual, so it might vary from context to context.



## Designing

PREPARATION:  
post-it notes, markers.

### STEP-BY-STEP

- ask participants to think about the type of the action that they want to implement.
- give them 5-10 minutes and ask them to remain silent while they are contemplating. Play a chilling music to help thinking process (Leafar Legov - Resident Advisor Set).

- ask participants to write down 1 idea per post-it note.
- once done, let participants read out the ideas and put the post-it notes on the floor.
- try to group the papers and read out the groups.
- ask participants to stand on the idea that they want to work and develop.
- this allows you to group them.
- give them 1 hour to plan their counter and alternative narratives in details.

PREPARATION:  
print out the checklist

### STEP-BY-STEP:

- tell the participants that creating counter and alternative narratives against hate speech brings the responsibility to have high quality and to be based on the principles of human rights, therefore, it's important to listen to the feedback and the criticism;
- ask participants to prepare the 3 min presentation of their design;
- on each presentation select 2 volunteers and ask them to check if the presented counter and alternative narrative fits the checklist; ask them to prepare a short report and read it out to the presenters as a feedback;
- after the presentations ask participants if they need any kind of help from each other;
- give them time to apply changes to the design.

## human rights checklist

Checklist (from We CAN! Manual):

- > Does it humanise?
- > Does it promote solidarity?
- > Does it promote participation?
- > Does it encourage intercultural dialogue?
- > Does it promote values of non-discrimination and equality?
- > Does it empower?
- > Does it encourage learning about human rights?

Counter and alternative narratives should not be:

- > Defensive;
- > Victimising;
- > Naïve;
- > Preaching;
- > (re)producing hate speech.

## action

we think 1 day for action is enough for a regular CAN-LAB, however it depends on the context of the group and the type of the action that the participants pursue. During action participants put their design into reality.

Participants might choose to be “bumblebees” - those who stick to one subgroup and “butterflies” - those who fly around but bring valuable contributions to each subgroup.

Allow participants to work hard but bring some stress-relieving activities in the evening to help them relax.

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### PREPARATION:

arrange the room in a way that participants can present in a comfortable way and find appreciation. We suggest to have an amphitheater shape.

### STEP-BY-STEP

- tell participants that they have 1 minute to introduce the narrative;
- 5 minutes to present the narrative;
- 2 minutes to listen to the feedback.

## Presentations

### DEBRIEFING:

- how was the process?
- what kind of learning did working in groups bring?
- would you plan something differently?
- what kind of reaction do you think your friends and relatives will have?
- what kind of reaction do you expect from your target audience?
- how would you plan to evaluate your narratives?

# what's next?

once the steps for implementation of the counter/alternative narrative is finished participants should start evaluation. This is a very important part of the activity.

We are working hard to create a separate publication for evaluation of the narratives.

# credits:

this publication is intended to raise accessibility of using Council of Europe manual "We CAN!" in the groups of young people within non-formal education.

the idea of the publication was born on the Study Session "Making Counter and Alternative Narratives Accessible" which was implemented by the No Hate Speech Movement National Coordinators and Council of Europe Youth Department at European Youth Center in Strasbourg in September, 2018.

The publication is developed by Nika BAKHSOLIANI from Human Rights Education Youth Network

with the help of Debora BARLETTA, Matteo HAENEN and Emmanuelle MAINIL .

The activity was first piloted on a training course "No Hate Bootcamp" with Nika BAKHSOLIANI, Emilia ASTORE and David MGELADZE. Supported by Bureau International Jeunesse through Erasmus+ programme, implemented by Youth Association DRONI and We Speak Love.

The pilot report prepared by Tiniko NADIRASHVILI.

## WE CAN!

Taking Action against Hate Speech through Counter and Alternative Narratives



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