

Further information on ZARA

The ZARA – Zivilcourage und Anti-Rassismus-Arbeit non-profit association is a non-governmental organisation which fights racism in Austria. Since 2000, ZARA has been running a Counselling Service for victims of racism and those who have witnessed it which gives persons affected free support and legal counselling. Since it was founded, ZARA has also been involved in fighting online hate. With the #GegenHassimNetz Counselling Service, it has broadened its portfolio by including further grounds of discrimination as well as cyber-bullying.

www.zara.or.at

CounterACT!

ZARA provides a broad range of information, tools and guidelines for action for effectively fighting online hate and smear campaigns with its CounterACT! – Aktiv gegen Hass und Hetze im Netz (Take an Active Part in Fighting Online Hate and Smear Campaigns) online platform. The platform also provides an overview of action groups, campaigns, educational work and research focussing on online hate. The brochure of the same name containing illustrative examples and options for action which can be used as educational material can be requested free of charge by sending an e-mail to:

www.counteract.or.at



Contact

Phone: (+43) 01 - 236 55 34

E-mail: beratung@zara.or.at

Online registration form: beratungsstelle.counteract.or.at

The #GegenHassimNetz Counselling Service is available:

Mon. to Wed.: 9 am to 4.30 pm

Thurs.: 10 am to 6.30 pm

Fri.: 9 am to 3 pm

Please note that counselling without interpreter can be given in German or English only. Personal appointments in Counselling Service offices are possible by prior arrangement only.

Legal and contact details

Owner and publisher:

ZARA – Zivilcourage und Anti-Rassismus-Arbeit

Schoenbrunner Strasse 119/13, 1050 Vienna, Austria

Austrian Register of Associations: 236017119

www.zara.or.at

ZARA is a non-profit association with headquarters in Vienna, Austria

Logo design: Ernst Zeeh

Layout: schultz+schultz-Mediengestaltung/Sarah Steiner

Printing: onlineprinters.at



ZARA runs the #GegenHassimNetz
Counselling Service on behalf of:

BUNDESKANZLERAMT ÖSTERREICH



ENGLISCH / ENGLISH

#GegenHassimNetz (#against online hate) Counselling Service

Is someone calling you names on Facebook because your name sounds "foreign"? Have you noticed frequent derogatory comments on your gender, your country of origin or your sexual orientation when chatting online? Do you feel threatened because someone is posting threats of violence to your group in Internet forums?

The #GegenHassimNetz Counselling Service can assist you in situations like these! The Counselling Service staff will give an initial assessment of the matter in hand and discuss with you your possible options for how to proceed and any possible action that can be taken by you and the Counselling Service together. They'll provide you free of charge and promptly with information on any legal action you can take and what other action you yourself can take to fight online hate.

The #GegenHassimNetz Counselling Service helps Internet users affected by hate, smear campaigns and cyber-bullying to take effective action against corresponding online material and against those who have posted it.

Why is the #GegenHassimNetz Counselling Service necessary?

Online hate is everywhere and affects many users – regardless of whether they are victims or have witnessed it. Online hate and smear campaigns influence public opinion and consequently pose a potential risk to democracy and the rule of law.

Many persons know that online hate is not OK. But not all users are yet aware that doing so frequently also involves criminal acts – such as smear campaigns or cyber-bullying. The aim of the #GegenHassimNetz Counselling Service is to boost this awareness and, above all, to assist those affected to take action against hate and smear campaigns.

What is online hate?

Online hate is when material spread online refers to a person or to a specific group of persons in an insulting or discriminatory manner. Such online hate may, for instance, be racist, sexist, anti-Semitic or homophobic or may advocate violence. This online hate frequently constitutes a criminal offence and is thus illegal.

What is cyber-bullying?

Cyber-bullying is deliberately harassing, insulting or embarrassing someone online over a long period of time so that those affected suffer major prejudice. It is frequently the case that victim and perpetrator know each other personally. Cyber-bullying has been a criminal offence since January 2016.

How does the #GegenHassimNetz Counselling Service help those who contact it?

The #GegenHassimNetz Counselling Service supports and counsels victims of hate posts, cyber-bullying and other forms of verbal and mental violence online and those who have witnessed it. The low-threshold services are available free of charge.

After an initial assessment of the matter in hand, clients are informed by experienced counsellors of what they may choose to do and of possible counter-strategies. They also receive Assistance regarding possible legal and other steps they may take in addition to information on help available from other sources of support. Besides this, the Counselling Service reports the corresponding hate texts and posts to the relevant IT companies so as to secure their deletion. Counselling can be given by online chat, Messenger, e-mail or phone, and personal counselling appointments can be arranged by prior agreement.

The Counselling Service is provided by experienced staff with legal and psychosocial training of the non-profit association ZARA – Zivilcourage und Anti-Rassismus-Arbeit (Civil Courage and Anti-Racism Work), which has been running a Counselling Service since as early as 2000 and which has also dealt with cases of online hate right from the very start.

At whom is the help provided by the #GegenHassimNetz Counselling Service targeted?

- Victims of online hate and smear campaigns
- Members of disadvantaged groups against whom hatred is being incited online
- Members of disadvantaged groups about whom fake news is being circulated
- Victims of cyber-bullying
- Staff of organisations working with those affected

How can you contact the #GegenHassimNetz Counselling Service?

By phone: (+43) 01 - 236 55 34

By e-mail: beratung@zara.or.at

Web/chat/reporting form: beratungsstelle.counteract.or.at

By Facebook Messenger: [facebook.com/zara.or.at/](https://www.facebook.com/zara.or.at/)

By Twitter: CounteractHassimNetz

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