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 **rede ex aequo**
associação de jovens lésbicas, gays,
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 **Sapling**

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A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO


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Introduction & Purpose of the Toolkit

Welcome to **Rainbow Challenge – Twin Communities Toolkit**. By reading this, you'll join a wider youth community, tackling discrimination and protecting human rights. **Thank you for that!**

This toolkit is developed as part of the European Project **Rainbow Challenge – Twin Communities**, aimed at promoting human rights, social inclusion, and youth activism, within youth aged 12 to 19 years old.

THE PROJECT FOCUSES ON:

- creating freely accessible, scientifically grounded methodologies and digital tools* to educate youth and society across the EU;
- empowering young people, seeking to combat discrimination and build international cooperation networks for youth-led initiatives at both national and international levels.

This toolkit serves as a comprehensive resource for bridging the gap between education and activism. It is designed to raise awareness about human rights, equality, and social justice, motivating young people to take an active role in creating compassionate and equitable societies.

Here, you'll find essential tools and knowledge based on Non-Formal Education Methodology, to address issues of discrimination, inequality, and human rights on six critical topics: **LGBTIQ+ issues, migrants and refugees (xenophobia), ageism, gender equality, ability/disability, and racism** - it fosters empathy, promotes understanding, and empowers young people to become active change-makers, enabling them to engage with these issues, implement practical initiatives, and develop new tools in their communities and groups.

This toolkit can be used in various educational and youth settings, including NGOs, informal youth groups, schools, and other training environments, where there is a need to deepen knowledge in human rights and activism. It's targeted for **youth, youth Workers, Educators and Parents and Legal Representatives**, empowering them with the knowledge and tools needed to fight discrimination and promote human rights across Europe.



Download the **Rainbow Challenge app** Androids [here](#) and iPhones [here](#) and find out about your social vulnerability in the [Human Rights Index](#).



Why this Toolkit is Important



This toolkit is a vital resource in addressing some of the most pressing social issues faced by young people today, empowering them (and you!) to be leaders in their own community, building a society where empathy, respect, and understanding are at the core of interactions.

With the knowledge and practical skills present in this toolkit, youth can help deconstruct stereotypes, myths and prejudices towards discriminated groups and building up:



This toolkit is also important to help shape the next generation of activists, leaders, and allies who will continue the work of breaking down barriers, promoting inclusion, and creating a world where everyone's rights are recognized and respected.

YOU WILL GAIN ALL THESE KEY BENEFITS:

- **Action-Oriented Learning:** By engaging in sessions with reflection exercises, young people are encouraged to act, challenge existing norms, and become leaders in promoting human rights and social justice.
- **Skills for Leadership:** The toolkit helps develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills, empowering youth to advocate for themselves and others.
- **Creating Safe Spaces:** With the tools to develop inclusive, respectful and safe environments, young people can contribute to communities where everyone, regardless of background or identity, feels valued and supported.



How to use it

It's time to change the world, one person and one community at a time!

1st Read the **'Let's start learning!'** section to develop leadership skills

2nd Read the **'Making my training: step by step'** section to learn how the sessions are and how you'll plan and navigate them

3rd Call your friends, family, colleagues and practice, practice, practice all the sessions already prepared for you at **'Let's do this! Practice with our proposals'**

4th Join or create an activist group, organize sessions at your school or local community, do different activities using the Human Rights Index & the Rainbow Challenge App... **have fun and learn from your own community!**



Let's start learning!

4.1. Youth leader profile

An effective youth leader requires a combination of skills, attributes, and a commitment to continuous learning and improvement. **Prepare yourself and:**

- **Be motivated and committed:** The more energy and presence you bring, better results you'll see at the end.
- **Continuously seek improvement:** Issues are continuously changing and what works once may not work in the future.
- **Understand your role:** your position and tasks in the group dynamics are extremely important.
- **Focus the training on the learner:** the people in front of you have the key to understand, learn, improve and apply the change.
- **Be a model and an agent of change:** it all starts with you... and continues within you. Walk the talk, be meaningful in what you transmit.
- **Be adaptable:** change and unexpected situations occur. Adaptability is the ability to respond quickly and effectively to that new reality.
- **Encourage self-discovery, teamwork and cooperation:** this aids in accomplishing goals effectively and creates an environment of learning and growth.
- **Be clear, accessible and kind:** Communicate to be understood easily and with no judgment or trying to control the best way to do things.
- **Incorporate Active Listening:** don't just hear what someone is saying, but comprehend the intent behind their words and respond appropriately.
- **Be authentic:** That's a powerful way to influence others. Personal integrity, transparency, and consistency naturally inspire trust and respect.
- **Understand Emotional Intelligence:** Being connected and aware of emotions will help you handle stressful situations, conflict, and challenges, while fostering positive relationships in your community.
- **Create an Inclusive Environment:** Foster a sense of belonging and acceptance, valuing everyone and appreciating contributions.
- **Promote Creativity and Innovation:** Challenge your audience to make it different, fostering problem-solving and continuous improvement.
- **Use Technology Responsibly:** ensure it helps rather than hinders your session effectiveness.
- **Set and Achieve Goals:** Know what you want and share it, for getting direction, focus, and motivation towards it.
- **Exercise Patience and Persistence:** resilience will help you to thrive when you need that extra push.

4.2. Types of Leadership & Communication

You adopt a facilitator attitude whenever you take a guiding approach, ask the group to complete a task/work, or support and encourage the group.

It's important to understand the attitudes of each facilitation style so you can better adapt your behavior to the diversity and nature of the groups. You don't have to adopt the same style all the time; instead, you need to coordinate activities and mobilize the energies of the group members to ensure the goals are achieved.



TYPES OF LEADER

AUTHORITARIAN

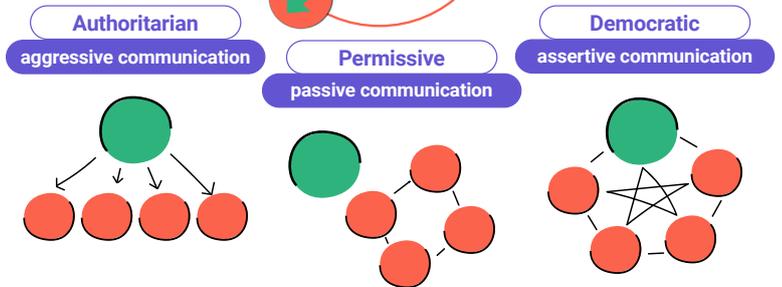
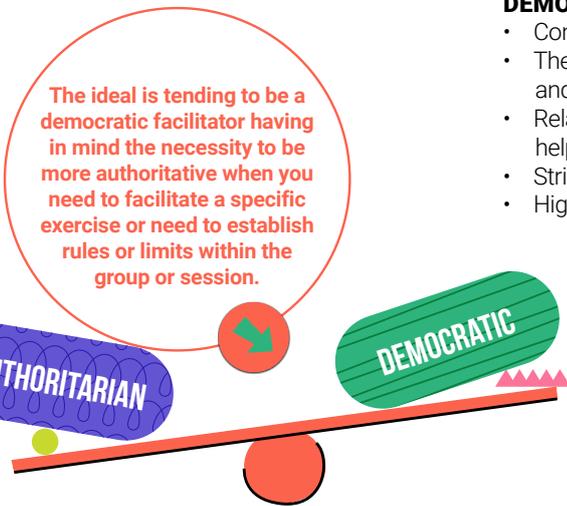
- Makes decisions without consulting the group;
- Does not communicate the objectives to the group members;
- Does not accept suggestions;
- Commands all activities and does not collaborate with the group;
- Evaluates the activity of group members without clarifying the criteria used;
- High productivity, but low motivation and satisfaction levels.

PERMISSIVE

- Does not provide direction for the group;
- Only intervenes when asked, not taking initiatives or making decisions;
- Avoids not to evaluate group members, and when doing so, it's subjective and unclear;
- Low levels of productivity, motivation, and satisfaction.

DEMOCRATIC

- Consults the group members on how the work should proceed;
- The group participates in decision-making, contributing to defining strategies and means to achieve objectives;
- Relationships between group members are marked by cooperation and mutual help;
- Strives to be objective and transparent in evaluating the work produced;
- High levels of motivation and satisfaction, with satisfactory productivity.



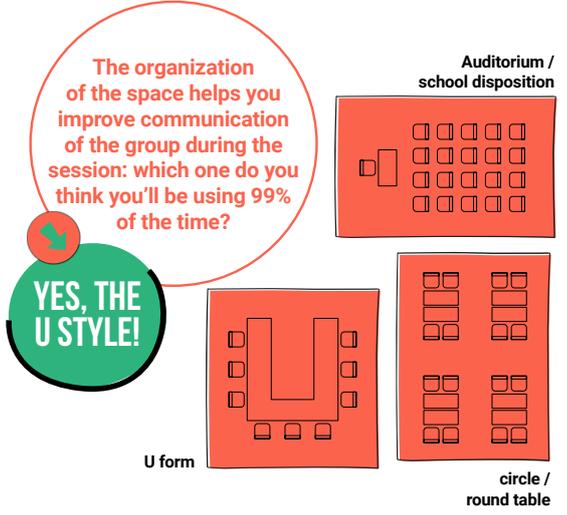
Humans can communicate through verbal and/or nonverbal ways:

35% Verbal communication

65% Non-verbal communication

- Verbal communication**
- oral form
 - written form
- Non-verbal communication**
- gestures
 - facial expression
 - visual contact
 - smile
 - voice
 - silence
 - distance

- TIPS**
- talk with the audience and not to the audience;
 - don't overuse technical terms;
 - don't get lost in details;
 - avoid orthographic errors
- TIPS**
- avoid "nervous" gestures such as tapping the pen, touching the hair and the glasses,..
 - avoid looking at the floor, the ceiling, only one person or through the people;
 - avoid being too still, use excessive gestures, arms closed, back turned, hands on the waist;
 - avoid misuse of the audiovisual resources



DON'T START BEFORE YOU SET THESE GROUND RULES AND THEY ARE CLEAR FOR EVERYONE.

ENCOURAGE ALL PARTICIPANTS TO ACTIVELY ENGAGE WITH THESE GUIDELINES!

4.3. Guidelines to create a Safe Space

To ensure a safe, inclusive, collaborative, respectful, and productive environment for all participants, the following **guidelines** must be clear from the start and must be followed during any activity involving this toolkit (or any other really!).

RESPECT FOR EVERYONE'S IDENTITY AND EXPERIENCES

- **Listen actively:** pay attention when others are speaking. Avoid interrupting and show that you value their contribution.
- **Respect personal boundaries:** be mindful of people's personal space and comfort levels, particularly when discussing sensitive topics.
- **Acknowledge diverse experiences:** understand that people from different backgrounds and communities may have different lived experiences.

SAFE AND INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

- **Use inclusive and non-discriminatory** language
- **Avoid offensive terms:** choose language that is affirming and respectful. Be conscious of terms that can hurt, alienate others or perpetuate stereotypes.
- In case of doubt: **ask or apologise!**
- **Be open to learn:** if someone points out that something you said was hurtful or problematic, listen with an open mind and be willing to learn from it. Don't take it personally!

NO DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, OR BULLYING

- **Zero tolerance for discrimination:** you can say that any discrimination based on characteristics that people cannot change in 1 minute (or at all!) will not be tolerated.
- **Report inappropriate behavior:** if you witness or experience any form of bullying or harassment, report it to any adult that you trust.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND TRUST

- **What's shared in the room stays in the room:** this includes personal stories, experiences, and opinions shared during discussions.
- **Consent for sharing personal stories:** if you want to share a personal story, ask for permission before doing so and respect others' boundaries.
- **Share photos or videos with consent:** ask in advance and be clear about the objectives (archive, posting, etc.). If someone in the group doesn't want it, respect and make them comfortable with their decision.

PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT

- **Be present:** engage fully in the activities, discussions, and reflections.
- **Respect speaking time:** make sure everyone has a chance to contribute, without dominating the conversation.
- **Ask questions and share ideas:** define if there's a particular space for Q&A or if people can ask questions and share your thoughts and insights freely.

OPENNESS TO FEEDBACK

- **Constructive feedback:** if you have feedback for others, be respectful, supportive and focus on offering suggestions for improvement, not criticism.
- **Receive feedback gracefully:** if someone offers feedback on your actions or ideas, listen carefully and try to understand their perspective.

BE KIND AND PATIENT

- **Support one another:** encourage others, especially when they are stepping out of their comfort zones or expressing difficult ideas.
- **Be patient:** learning about sensitive, complex or challenging topics and implementing social change requires time and effort. Be patient with yourself and others.

TAKE CARE OF YOUR WELL-BEING

- **Self-care:** participate in activities that help maintain your well-being, whether it's taking breaks, asking for help or discussing challenging topics with others.
- **Reach out for help:** if you are feeling uncomfortable, anxious, or upset, talk to a facilitator, teacher, or counselor for support.

NO MOBILE PHONES OR TABLETS

- **Ask to turn off notifications and put on silence:** even if you'll need it at the session, ask to use it only when necessary.

4.4. Understand how Stereotypes and Prejudices Develop

- **Media Influence:** The media often portrays vulnerable groups in a certain light, which have a strong weight in shaping public views. If the news focuses mostly on stories that reinforce stereotypes, people will believe it.
- **Lack of Interaction:** If we don't meet or interact with people from different backgrounds, it's easy to rely on stereotypes. We fill in the blanks with assumptions instead of real knowledge.
- **Fear of the Unknown:** Sometimes, prejudice arises from fear. When we encounter something or someone unfamiliar, our brains may react with uncertainty or even fear, which can lead to negative judgments.
- **Societal and Cultural Conditioning:** Stereotypes can be passed down from generation to generation. In some cases, historical events or cultural narratives can reinforce negative perceptions about certain groups.

TIPS TO CHALLENGE STEREOTYPES AND PREJUDICES:



**Question
What
You Hear**

Read books, watch documentaries, and follow social media accounts that offer different perspectives

**Get to Know
People as
Individuals**

**Speak Out
Against
Discrimination**

**Reflect
on your own
stereotypes and
work to deconstruct
them**

TIPS TO AVOID CONFLICTS:



- Ensure a U-shaped seating arrangement
- Promote the introduction of each person
- Discuss and clarify the group's operating rules or session goals
- Avoid prolonged theoretical presentations
- Take predominantly positive actions
- Avoid prejudices, stereotypes, and generalizations
- Respect individuality and social diversity

BUT...
**HOW TO RESPOND ASSERTIVELY
WHEN CONFLICTS ARISE?**

Share how that can make one feel

Ask the group what they suggest being done OR ask the person to talk later

Respond from a calm place

Phrase facts, simplify what it was said or done

End the conversation: pick up where you were before or continue with the session calmly

You can always ask the person to leave...



4.5. Learning in a different way

Based on many years of experience in activism, we suggest that your sessions use **Non-Formal Methodology**. This refers to any type of organized educational activity that takes place outside the formal school system. This type of education can occur in a variety of settings, such as community centers, workplaces and online platforms and focuses on practical skills and experiential learning, rather than academic knowledge.

It's an active methodology: through simulated practice people deepen personal reflection within group discussion. The main key elements are: **being a creative, experiential and participatory way of learning!**

4.5.1. Methods & Activities

During the sessions, you'll use pedagogical methods, which will help choosing the activities to ensure that everyone has fun while the topic is discussed and understood. You can see it as a set of ways you can use to interact and manage the session.

Pierre Goguelin, in 1990 (*very old, yes, but still very updated!*), grouped pedagogical methods into three categories - **AFFIRMATIVE, INTERROGATIVE and ACTIVE**.



AFFIRMATIVE METHOD, it can be:

Expository: Oral method of transmitting information and content, where the learner is limited to receiving, assimilating, and understanding the information transmitted.



- Use it wisely and briefly, because it can get boring
- Provide concrete examples, emphasizing what the group really need to know
- Prepare with key concepts, diagrams and images
- Ask one or more people to read texts aloud, avoiding exhaustive reading.
- Invest in non-verbal communication by making eye contact and speaking with a smile 😊
- Have good control of the voice, increasing or decreasing the tone to highlight words or expressions, thus avoiding monotony.
- Tailor the speech to the target audience.

Demonstrative: Transmission of technical and practical knowledge through exemplification, demonstration, and reproduction of skills. This method focuses on how to perform a specific task.



- Motivate the group to the task in hand, ask who has previous experience
- State the general goal of the task to situate everyone
- Demonstrate each step of the task, explaining the concepts and execution
- Ask a person to repeat the task, explaining the steps
- After the group's demonstration, provide positive reinforcement



INTERROGATIVE METHOD:

Through questions, you'll help each person discover what they will be reflecting on, involving them in the construction of their own learning.



- Ask one question at a time, clearly and concisely
- Direct the questions to the whole group, give time to think, and accept spontaneous responses
- Encourage participation through listening attentively and validate all answers.



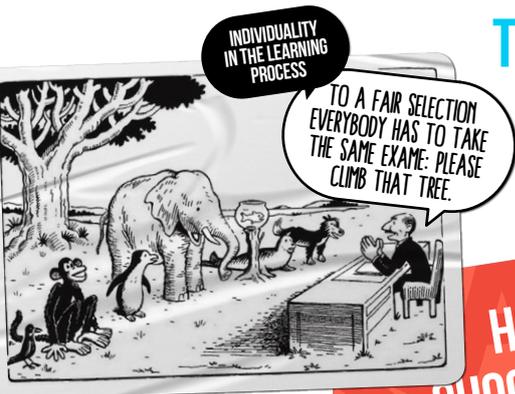
ACTIVE METHOD:

This method is based on action, putting the learner and the group at the central agents of the learning. There are some examples of what you can do:

- Educational games;
- Brainstorming;
- Case studies;
- Role-playing;
- Group work.



- Plan and practice very well in advance, including all resources you'll need
- Manage your time well - bigger group... longer activities!
- Be organized and focused because you'll need different resources
- Be present and available, develop emotional maturity and self-confidence as it will help loads
- Study the goals and theory well
- Use your creativity and have fun!



HOW TO CHOOSE WHICH METHOD TO USE?

The affirmative method is still important to support theory, context and backgrounds but the interrogative and active methods are particularly crucial in fostering deeper engagement, critical thinking, and a more participatory learning environment. So you'll use more of these!

Consider the group, time, goals, space, resources, and so on.

TIPS FOR SOME ACTIVITIES



GROUP DIVISION:

- Divide into groups randomly or by placing people who don't know each other in the same group to encourage interaction between different people;
- Generally, groups with an equal number of elements work better.



PAIR ACTIVITIES:

- These can be a good idea for creating a more comfortable space for sharing;
- If the objective is to do a role-play activity that could be uncomfortable in front of the whole group, then this is a good option.



SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES:

- These create a more favorable context for brainstorming or completing a specific task more effectively if you have less time, for example;
- They allow each group member to participate more;
- The results are better when each group has people who are different from each other, so their perspectives on each issue will not be too similar.



LARGE GROUP ACTIVITIES:

- For this to work better, you'll have to have very clear objectives defined and make sure everyone understood them;
- Clarifying questions and reformulating interventions may be necessary to ensure everyone understands clearly;
- There may be more distractions, and in such cases, it is your role to redirect the discussion;
- If the group exceeds 15 people, it becomes more difficult to maintain a good level of participation.



ICEBREAKERS / ENERGIZERS

- Icebreakers are good for the start of the session or to activate participation;
- Energizers are good for when it is necessary to raise the group's energy levels. If you have a long session or a lot of theory, break it with an energizer!
- Both help to relax the group, boost focus and the mood.



ROLE-PLAY:

- Works best if people are not forced to take on a role but do it voluntarily;
- It provides a better understanding of what it's like to be in someone else's shoes and how they deal with specific situations;
- Emotions, reactions, thoughts, attitudes, behaviors, and values can all be explored;
- After the activity, there should be reflection to extract meaningful insights;
- Set clear guidelines/stories to prevent deviation and to stay focused on the activity's goal;
- This works very well if the group is creative.



4.5.2. Different types of resources

Depending on the activities you'll plan, you'll see what you need - make sure you can actually take them or the place has them! Most common resources are:

PHYSICAL AND PRINTED RESOURCES

- **A room:** with good lighting and large enough to allow for group dynamics.
- **Tables and chairs:** for different types of activities.
- **Computer and projector:** if you want to do a presentation or show some pictures.
- **Speakers:** so you can pass musics, sounds or even videos.
- **Internet connection:** to allow more diverse activities.
- **Printed stories, orientations:** To provide structured exercises, activities, and notes for you and your group.
- **Flipcharts, whiteboards, markers, and post-it notes:** For brainstormings, group work and visual learning.
- **Art materials/Stationery:** For interactive and creative tasks.

MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES

- **Presentation Software:** PowerPoint, Google Slides, etc..
- **Videos and Documentaries:** To inspire, with case studies, or to demonstrate real-life examples.
- **Podcasts and Audio Clips:** For providing additional perspectives or learning materials in an audio format.

DIGITAL TOOLS

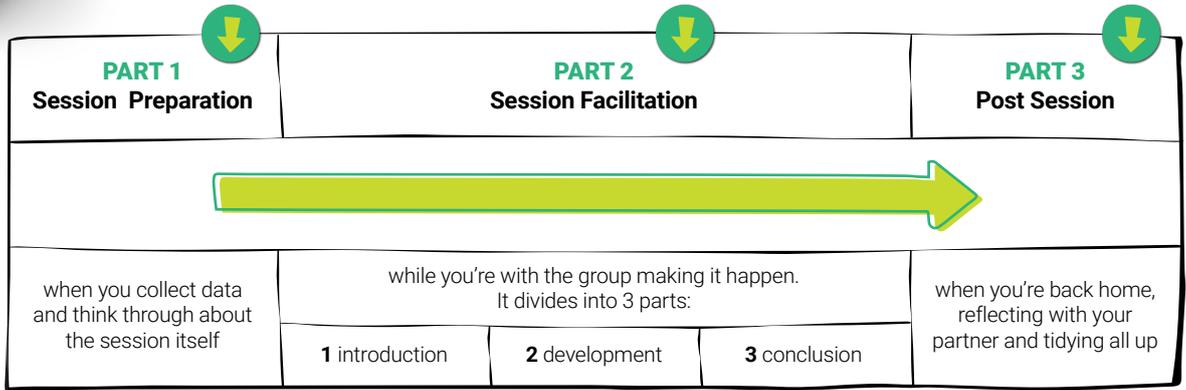
- **Video Conferencing Tools:** Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Meet, etc... Some are paid or have limited time.
- **Quizzes and Gamification Tools:** Kahoot, Wayground, Mentimeter or Educaplay. For interactive games and engaging the group.

THIS IS EASY!

05

Making my training: part by part

Basically, your session has **3 main parts**:



5.1. PART 1: Session preparation



STEP ONE

To be able to prepare your session you need to **collect data**. We made it easy by giving you the questions you need to answer for the session planification!

1. **What's the topic for the session?** This should be one of the 6 topics on Human Rights, but can be other or if someone asks for a specific one.
2. **What's the objective of the session?** Specify the issues within the chosen topic. For instance: "learn basic concepts"; "reflect on myths and stereotypes"; "deconstruct prejudices"; "develop an activist mind for action". Things to make your life easier:
 - always start the objective with a verb
 - make it short and simple
 - make it possible, tangible and achievable in that session
3. **How many sessions?** This is fundamental to managing content and organizing yourself. If it's more than one, you'll have to think separately and fill up a plan for each one.
4. **How much time do I have?** Depending on duration, you can approach issues differently and use different techniques and activities. You should always contemplate a break of about 10-15 minutes in the middle of a 2 hours session.
5. **For whom and for how many people?** This will help you adjust your content, behavior and discourse.
6. **How is the space?** Try to see the space beforehand or, if not possible, ask the size, what's in there, if it has good lighting and chairs to move around.
7. **What resources does it have?** know what you can count on, otherwise you'll have to take them yourself or plan the session accordingly.



STEP TWO

SESSION PLANNING

1. Print the version of this 'Session Planning' table, available at the end of this toolkit. This table will help you visualize the full session and make group planning work easier. You can find a big full page table.

Training team:		Where & When:		Topic:	
Goal:					Total Duration:
Target group:					Session n°:
Steps:	Contents to develop	Activities	Resources needed	Duration	
INTRODUCTION					
DEVELOPMENT					
CONCLUSION					

2. Plan individually each part of the 'Session Planning' table (introduction, development and conclusion), taking into consideration the order and necessary content.
3. Check our examples: each human right topic has a table!
4. Define the role of each facilitator, setting when and how each of you will intervene and for how long (ideally you should participate equally). Sessions should be facilitated by 2 people so while one is focused on their part, the colleague is helping out, observing or helping whenever is needed.

DON'T FORGET TO USE (AND ABUSE!) OUR TOOLS:



Download the **Rainbow Challenge app**
 Androids [here](#) and iPhones [here](#)

- **Human Rights Index:** a survey that allows you to see your personal social vulnerability score. You have 3 options: You can create a group, join a group (created previously) or do the survey individually.
- **Rainbow Challenge App*:** loads of activism tasks aimed at improving the conditions of vulnerable groups in their communities, region, country, or globally.



STEP THREE

- **Study all necessary theory** regarding the topic and the objectives of your session, getting prepared to answer some questions.
- If you have planned a presentation (for ex.: powerpoint), **develop it carefully, with short information** - it is just a visual support for you and the group!
- **We advise you to always take it printed.** Sometimes computers don't want to work or projectors don't connect. Always be prepared.
- **The preparation of each facilitator is essential.** You must ensure that both:
 - are familiar with the activity facilitating, ensuring that both are able to explain it in a clear and understandable manner;
 - know and understand the topic, being prepared to intervene and answer questions that may arise;
 - have access to the 'Session Planning' table, so you have help in case of forgetfulness;
 - have access to a clock to control the progress and duration of the activity.
- **Prepare and test** all needed materials with time, if something fails (like markers dry out or computer doesn't work) you have time to apply 'Plan B'.
- **Arrive at location at least 30 min before the start** so you can organize yourself and the room, making sure all works as planned. Again, if something doesn't work, you have time for plan B and C!
- **Take over your role!** You're facilitating reflection on Human Rights issues: you're making a very important contribution to the world and your future!
- **Breathe, check how your mind is and smile inwards!**



5.2. PART 2: Session Facilitation

5.2.1. Introduction

It's the start of the session and you're the host!
Receive participants with a calm and positive attitude.
Direct and position the participants appropriately.



START WITH:

- **Introducing yourself** and asking people to introduce themselves if they don't know each other.
- **Facilitating** a quick name icebreaker
- **Presenting** the topic and the objectives of the session
- **Evaluating** what people know about the topic with some open questions or some exercise. Understanding what the group knows helps you adequate the content and level of explanation for the session.

5.2.2. Development

It's the main part of the session, so let's dive in.



IT'S TIME FOR:

- **Theoretical sharing** - you can do an expository method combined with the interrogative method, for instance.
- **Practical activity** - main activity putting people work actively and directly on the central content learned.

Starting with theory or practice depends on the activity and the information that you want to deliver. Some theories are easier to understand after doing a main activity, using the final reflection to contextualize the findings.

5.2.3. Conclusion

It's the final part of the session so you'll need to promote a deep and participative summary and reflection of the session. Emphasise the importance of understanding subjects like human rights.



WRAP UP:

- **Create space for the final reflection**, doing a bridge with the theory
- **Do a final summary of the session** and reinforce the evolution of each person
- **Make a bridge** between this session and next activities on the rainbow Challenge App
- **Make yourself available** for questions



USEFUL TOOLS:

- **reflective (individual or group) questions** after the main activity so you can understand what the group learned or wants to share about it.
- **Fun platforms with few questions** for people to answer individually or in groups (for ex.: Figma board, Educaplay or Kahoot) and giving you more information about what the group learned.

5.3. PART 3: Post session

After each session you might feel tired but we advise you to, within the first 24h, **do these 2 final steps:**

- 1) **stop for a bit and reflect with your partner about the session.** You can share thoughts, uncomfortable moments, the best parts and so on. It's with these post session reflections that we summarise the learning experience. The more you practice and reflect, the more you reflect and practice - the more you learn!
 - Write notes in the sessions plans so you and your colleague can recall afterwards, whenever you need them and repeat or improve for the next session
- 2) **You'll end up with a lot of papers, pens, post-its etc. We advise you to tidy all up before you lose track** of your resources and have it all organized for the next session. Maybe have a folder to keep all together for next time.

06

Let's do this!
Practice with
our proposals

KNOW WHAT
YOU'RE
TALKING ABOUT

LET'S DIG IN!

Ageism | Disabilities | Gender Equality | LGBTQI+ | Migration | Racism

6.1. Ageism

BASIC CONCEPTS

[Important words in glossary: **Discrimination; Human Rights; Intersectionality; Prejudice; Privilege; Stereotypes**]

Ageism is a form of discrimination that affects people based on their age and can impact people of all ages - whether they are young or old. Understanding ageism is essential to creating a society where everyone, regardless of age, feels respected, included, and valued.

- **52% of Europeans** think that a person's age is a factor for discrimination or harassment in the workplace or in recruitment, by someone being considered too young or too old.
- **40% of young people in Portugal** report facing discrimination based on their age, especially in the workplace or when seeking opportunities. Many are viewed as "inexperienced" or "immature," even though they may bring new ideas and fresh perspectives.
- **Young people from 16 to 30 years old** in Europe feel they don't have much, or any, say over important decisions, laws and policies affecting them. This feeling increases the more distant the sphere of governance under consideration: **53% regarding local sphere, rising to 60% national level and to 70% for decisions, laws and policies affecting the EU.**
- **Over 50% of young people** say they have encountered negative stereotypes about their generation, including the perception that they are lazy or entitled (assuming or acting as though one has a special right or claim to wealth, success, recognition or other privileges). These stereotypes can limit their opportunities and social mobility.
- **50% of the world's population** is ageist against older people
- **2 in 5 people aged between 55 and 64** are excluded from the workforce in Europe.
- **Social isolation and loneliness affect 25% of the older population**, which are key risk factors for mental health conditions in later life.

THE IMPACT OF AGEISM

Ageism has a profound impact on people, both mentally and socially, regardless of their age. The beliefs and attitudes that people hold about age can influence their behavior and interactions with others. **Ageism can limit opportunities, affect mental health, and perpetuate misunderstandings between generations.**

OLDER INDIVIDUALS

For **older individuals**, ageism can lead to **social isolation**. When they are excluded from conversations or activities because of assumptions about their health or interests, they may feel **invisible and disconnected** from society, causing emotions such as **loneliness, frustration, and sadness, affecting their overall well-being**. Furthermore, older people may find it **harder to access services or receive proper care**, particularly in situations where professionals underestimate their needs due to their age.

YOUNGER PEOPLE

For **younger people**, ageism can create significant challenges as well. They might face **difficulty being taken seriously or trusted** with important tasks, as others may perceive them as **inexperienced or immature**. This can limit their career opportunities and social standing, forcing them to **constantly prove themselves** despite their capabilities.

Ageism | **Disabilities** | **Gender Equality** | **LGBTIQ+** | **Migration** | **Racism**

FOR ALL

In both cases, ageism can also negatively affect individuals' mental health. Those who experience discrimination based on age may suffer from diminished self-esteem and a lack of confidence. **The effects of ageism can even influence the way people see themselves and their potential, making it harder for them to embrace opportunities or feel valued in society.**

But ageism **also harms society as a whole by reinforcing divisions between age groups.** When we fail to recognize the value and contributions of people at all stages of life, we miss out on the rich diversity of experiences and perspectives that could benefit everyone.

HOW TO RECOGNIZE AGEISM?

Ageism can appear in different ways, and it can affect people's daily lives, relationships, and opportunities. Here are some examples of how ageism might show up:

- **In the Workplace:**
 - a. Against Older People:** Older individuals might be passed over for job opportunities, promotions, or training because they are seen as "too old" or "set in their ways."
 - b. Against Younger People:** On the flip side, younger people might be seen as "inexperienced" or "irresponsible," which can make it harder for them to gain trust or leadership roles.
- **In Society:**
 - a. Against Older People:** Older individuals may be stereotyped as being frail, outdated, or unable to adapt to new technology, which limits their social participation and opportunities for learning.
 - b. Against Younger People:** Young people are sometimes unfairly labeled as "lazy" or "entitled," which overlooks their potential and contributions to society.
- **In Media:**
 - a. Both older and younger people** are often portrayed in stereotypes in movies, TV shows, and social media. Older people may be shown as weak or irrelevant, while young people might be depicted as rebellious or careless.

FIGHT
THE
CLICHÉS

STEREOTYPES AND PREJUDICES

Ageism often arises due to a combination of cultural beliefs, fears, and misunderstandings. It also involves harmful biases, where assumptions about someone's abilities, experiences, and potential are shaped by stereotypes regarding age.

AN IDEALIZED IMAGE OF YOUTHFULNESS

In many cultures, there is a strong focus on youth and the qualities that are often associated with young people, such as **energy, beauty, and innovation.** As a result, older individuals may be viewed as less relevant or capable, simply because they don't fit in that idealization. This cultural emphasis on youth can make older people feel undervalued and invisible, reinforcing stereotypes that limit their opportunities and involvement in society. For example, casting a young actress to play an older character just because younger beauty (with no wrinkles for instance) is more valued and not because of talent or character adequacy.

THE FEAR OF AGING

People may feel uncomfortable with the idea of growing older and all the changes that come with it - both physically and mentally. This fear can translate into negative attitudes toward older people, as individuals may unconsciously associate aging with **weakness, decline, or loss of relevance.** For example, in a work social hang-out avoid mingling with an older colleague who isn't considered cool.

Ageism | Disabilities | Gender Equality | LGBTQI+ | Migration | Racism

UNDERESTIMATION OR DISMISSAL OF YOUTH

Similarly, younger people can face ageism in the form of underestimation or dismissal, with assumptions that they lack experience or maturity, even though they may have fresh ideas and valuable perspectives to offer. For example, in Portugal to run for Presidential Elections, one must have a 35 years-old minimum.

LACK OF INTERACTION BETWEEN GENERATIONS

When young people don't regularly engage with older individuals (or vice versa), they may form opinions based on stereotypes or misinformation rather than personal experience. The more we interact across generations, the better we can understand and appreciate the unique qualities of each age group. For example, the rapid pace of technological change can exacerbate ageism, as younger generations grow up with technology and new ways of thinking that older generations may struggle to adapt to, leading to misconceptions about their capabilities.

ADAPTABILITY VS. CONSERVADORISM

Societal values and wide spread narratives leading to the belief that younger individuals are more adaptable and innovative, while older individuals are seen as resistant to change. In Portugal, for instance, there is a saying "old donkey doesn't learn languages" and an expression from literature "The old man of Restelo", characterizing someone that opposes all things new and different.

NOT CAPABLE OF DECISION MAKING

This prejudice affects both groups, due to different stereotypes, leading to exclusion, discredit and dismissal. In older adults, the belief that they are frail, technologically inept, or incapable of change, can be used to justify excluding them from decision-making or leadership positions. Similarly, in youth, assumptions that they are irresponsible, unproductive, or incapable of leadership also affect how they are treated in the workplace, in education, or in public policy.

*"In a social dinner at my home, my parents and their friends were having a political discussion. One of them said something that I didn't agree with and I called it, presenting my ideas. Immediately he cut me out saying that I was too young to understand and didn't have the maturity to handle that kind of issue. Some other friends laughed and I felt really mad and sad."
(Portugal, non binary, 14)*



As a young person, it's crucial you **recognize that ageism can affect not only older generations but also your own age group.** In the end, **age should never define someone's worth.** Whether young or old, every individual has unique qualities and perspectives that enrich our communities.

USE REAL EXPERIENCES

STORIES OF DISCRIMINATION

*"When I talk about politics or human rights, adults in my environment have already told me more than once: 'You're still too young to understand'. Even when I argue logically, I feel like they don't hear me just because of my age."
(Lithuania, boy, 17)*

*"When I said that I no longer wanted to go to church, my grandmother said: 'When you're an adult, then you'll be able to decide where to go or not to go'. I felt like my beliefs didn't exist. I wanted to explain my reasons, but I was silenced as soon as I started to speak."
(Lithuania, girl, 16)*

*"When I was young my mom always told me that I should listen and respect elders. Once my uncle was really mean to my step-dad because he did something in a different way as my uncle expected, so I defended my step-dad. Then my mom told me that my uncle is older and he knows the best and I shouldn't question him, be quiet and not disrespectful."
(Slovakia, boy, 22)*

*"People often seem to think that teenagers don't have interest in their surroundings, don't care about global issues or politics and don't engage or try enough. While this narrative is quite stereotypical and overplayed, I think its impact can be bigger than we think, like frustration, demotivation, even burn-out, which leads to the actual passivity and mental health issues of "victims". I suppose people saying these deductions mainly want to mobilise us to do more (they don't mean to hurt or humiliate us), which can work for some people motivated by toxic motivation, but for me personally this way of approach is inconsiderate and doesn't push me forward, rather makes me frustrated and more prone to giving up."
(Slovakia, girl, 16)*

*"Since my 30's I always had grey hair and soon discovered that people treated me differently in specific situations because of that. I'm around young people a lot and sometimes they assume that I don't know some trends or words just because I'm older, and disregard my point of view because of that assumption."
(Portugal, woman, 48)*



Ageism | Disabilities | Gender Equality | LGBTQ+ | Migration | Racism

SESSION PLANNING

Activity

“What’s age got to do with it?”

Goal: Deconstruct stereotypes about age

Dynamics: Group work, brainstorming, scenarios discussion

Duration: 30 m

Prepare beforehand: chairs, tables, white board + pens, printed activity and printed scenarios, 5 papers, 5 pens (1 for each group).

Instructions:

1. **5'** divide the group into 5 smaller groups and hand out each group a different scenario, 1 paper and 1 pen:
 - a. In a supermarket, an older customer comes to a self-checkout lane and starts using it. Without asking, the cashier approaches the person and begins giving instructions slowly and in a simplified manner, as if explaining to a child. The customer refuses help and continues scanning their items. The cashier looks disbelieving, remaining near the customer and watching closely all the operation.
 - b. A skilled young employee, who often brings new and good ideas to the company, wants a promotion. The manager discourages them: “You still have time, you need to put in a few more years first.” Despite the fact that the young employee has the necessary skills, their application is dismissed and an older colleague takes the promotion.
 - c. In a doctor’s appointment, an older person describes their health symptoms and their severe pain. The doctor automatically responds: “That’s normal at your age,” without a thorough examination or searching for other causes.
 - d. An under 30-year-old hotel manager is explaining to an elderly couple that their room is booked for a different date and that they have arrived at the wrong time. The manager tries to explain it patiently and clearly. The customers don’t really listen and ask if they can speak to someone more competent. The manager tells them their responsibility and position, but the couple ignore it and insist on speaking with someone older and more experienced.
 - e. At a family gathering, the topic of politics comes up. A 16-year-old daughter wants to join the discussion. The adult family members let her speak, but dismiss all her arguments with phrases like: “You’re still young / You can’t really understand this yet / You still have time for such things”.
2. **Explain the activity:** each group must read the scenario and discuss it within the group considering 3 major questions (write the questions in the white board):
 - i. Do you identify Ageism? Why?
 - ii. How would you feel in that situation?
 - iii. What do you think could/should be different?
3. **10'** Give them 10 minutes to discuss and choose a team speaker.
4. **15'** Ask each group to read their scenario and present their thoughts, giving then opportunity to the all group to give their opinion.



TIPS/NOTES:

- **If you feel the group is very chatty**, use less scenarios for better time management
- **You can promote intersectionality**, adding gender to the talk, for example would a given situation be different if it was a man or a woman.
- **Promote further discussion and reflection** adding more questions in the end:
 - Have you experienced or witnessed ageism? How did it feel?
 - What stereotypes about age have you personally held, and how can you challenge them?
 - How can cooperation between generations benefit society?

SESSION PLANNING

Ageism | **Disabilities** | **Gender Equality** | **LGBTIQ+** | **Migration** | **Racism**

Training team: Ana and Pedro		Where & When: Birthday party, June 2025		Topic: AGEISM	
Goal:	Comprehend the impact of age discrimination in the society and on people's lives; deconstruct stereotypes and prejudices about young and old people.			Session nº:	1
Target group:	Mainly young people, to 15 to 20 people			Total Duration:	1h
Steps:	Contents to develop	Activities	Resources needed	Duration	
INTRODUCTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome everyone • Go through the objective of the session. • Ask each person to write in post-its ideas/sentences about ageism and fix it in a hall/board. • Read them to reinforce some basic concepts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written individual participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Printed session preparation • Post-it and pens 	15'	
DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dynamize the activity; • Answer some questions that might arise; • Time for final reflection in the group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity "What's age got to do with it?" • Questioning for final reflection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Printed exercise file; • white board/flipchart + pens, • printed activity and printed scenarios, 5 papers, • 5 pens (1 for each group) 	30'	
CONCLUSION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarize all contents learned; • Answer questions and final reflection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open space for last questions and sharings. 	—	5' to 15'	



6.2. Disabilities

BASIC CONCEPTS

[Important words in glossary: **Activism; Advocacy; Bisexual; Discrimination; Empathy; Human Rights; Prejudice; Social inequality; Stereotypes**]

The term **“disabled people”** (identity-first language) is mostly supported by disability rights advocates and activists, therefore it will be used throughout the document, rather than “people with disabilities” (person-first language). This approach highlights that individuals are **disabled by society**, not by their bodies, and disability is not something to hide, but a shared cultural and political identity, a collective experience of oppression, and hopefully a source of pride.

Disability may be visible or hidden, permanent or temporary and may have a minimal or substantial impact on a person’s daily life, either because of societal prejudices, or of structural problems in society, or because of their own impairments. This means that they often need positive efforts from society if they are to have an equal chance of participating. In particular, this can apply to areas such as access to information, health, education and employment. Positive action seeks to promote the representation of particular groups that have traditionally suffered from discrimination, with the aim of creating a more egalitarian society.

MODELS OF DISABILITY

Medical model: disability is seen as an individual problem, a biological or pathological condition, which **should be fixed, treated, or cured**. Disabled people are perceived as “objects” of care, with a passive role, which often leads to practices such as institutionalization. In this context, disabled people are isolated and kept away from society to be “treated” or “looked after,” but without the right to make basic decisions, to have autonomy, or to actively participate in social life. Within an unequal power relationship, professionals and specialists tend to control and manage medical, therapeutic, and psychological interventions to “normalize” their bodies and minds.

Social model proposes a paradigm shift: disability is the result of exclusionary social structures. From this perspective, disability arises from the interaction between individual impairments and the barriers created by society. In this sense, it highlights physical/environmental, attitudinal, communicational, economic, social/cultural, and institutional/systemic barriers, which restrict the full participation of disabled people in society. **This approach argues that disability is a natural variation of the human experience, and that disabled people are not the problem, nor do they need to be cured. Instead, the emphasis is on removing social barriers and discrimination.**

The social model is not just about adapting spaces (such as ramps, elevators, or sign language), but about bringing structural change to society so that all people, regardless of their individual conditions, can fully participate in every aspect of social, political, cultural, and economic life. This social transformation necessarily involves the implementation of inclusive public policies that guarantee accessibility (both physical and communicational) at all levels and in all areas of life – from education to the labor market, from civic to political participation, access to culture, leisure, and sports, as well as all the rights to individual identity. This way of understanding disability is extremely liberating and empowering for disabled people, turning the focus to the external environment and removing the focus from them. This change of perspective liberates a disabled person from seeing oneself as a lesser, poorer, weaker (and so on) person, but as someone that needs (and should demand) other things from society.

INDEPENDENT LIVING

The concept of Independent Living means that disabled people should have control over their own lives and the community where they live, make decisions about their daily routines, and set goals for themselves and for their future.

According to the European Network on Independent Living (ENIL), this includes the opportunity to make real choices and decisions regarding where to live, with whom to live, and how to live. Services must be available, accessible to all and provided on the basis of equal opportunity, free and informed consent and allowing disabled people flexibility in our daily life. Independent living requires that the built environment, transport and information are accessible, that there is availability of technical aids, access to personal assistance and/or community-based services. It is necessary to point out that independent living is for all disabled people, regardless of the gender, age and the level of their support needs.



Independent living does not mean being independent from other people, but having the freedom of choice and control over one's own life and lifestyle! Instead of being a burden or object of pity and charity, means to be a full and independent person.

Sexual and reproductive rights of disabled people

Disabled people continue to face significant barriers to sexual health, especially when they also belong to the LGBTQI+ community, although it is recognized as a human right. Their invisibility is worsened by a lack of representation, higher discrimination, and multiple forms of violence.

- In a sample of LGBTQI+ youth, about one-third (29%) reported having a disability, showing higher rates of discrimination, psychopathological symptoms, and suicidal behavior.
- Disabled people are at higher risk of sexual violence, especially women.



STEREOTYPES AND PREJUDICES

Ableism refers to discrimination, oppression, and abuse against disabled people, considering them **inferior to non-disabled people**. It includes any distinction, exclusion, or restriction based on disability, denying disabled people the recognition, enjoyment, or exercise, on an equal basis with others, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Ableism is the root of all the stereotypes and prejudices that still exist regarding disabled people.

Disabled people experience ableism in many forms, such as:

- **paternalistic/condescending** - like using another tone of voice,
- **Infantilization** - like patting a wheelchair user on the head,
- **Inspirational** - not addressing a disabled person as a real person,
- **Hostile** - like undermining their independence or way of living,
- **Invalidation** - not recognition disabled people autonomy and self worth,
- **Envious** - like envying the "attention" or the "perks",
- **Unwanted help** - like pushing a wheelchair without consent,
- **Dehumanizing** - disregarding one's feelings and thoughts,
- **Invasions of privacy** - not respecting the conventional and social boundaries.

Disabled people are entitled to exactly the same human rights as people without disabilities, yet they are subject to direct and indirect discrimination and exclusion in almost every area of life.

Ageism | Disabilities | Gender Equality | LGBTIQ+ | Migration | Racism

Barriers to accessing healthcare for disabled people include a range of structural, communicational, and attitudinal factors. These include the lack of physical accessibility, such as the absence of ramps, adapted examination tables, or appropriate transportation; the absence of accessible informational materials, such as documents in Braille, large print, plain language, or pictograms, as well as the lack of sign language interpreters; negative attitudes from healthcare professionals; insufficient knowledge or training among professionals about the specific needs of disabled people; poor coordination between different healthcare providers; and inadequate funding, including the absence or limitation of health insurance.

INVISIBILITY AND STIGMATIZATION OF DISABLED PEOPLE'S SEXUALITY

A prevailing view ignores disabled people's sexual lives, placing them at extremes: either as "asexual," without desires or the ability to understand them, or as hypersexual, promiscuous, and uncontrolled. Both views contribute to the invisibility and stigmatization of disabled people's sexuality, and reveal how sexuality and gender identity of disabled people continue to be underexplored, both in research and in institutional practices.

Adding to that, overprotection and lack of sexual education increase vulnerability, fostering secretive relationships and exposure to sexual exploitation.



STORIES OF DISCRIMINATION

"I have sensory sensitivity, so during breaks I sometimes go to the quiet room. Some students mock me, saying: 'Oh, maybe go to your little calming room again.'" (Lithuania, boy, 14)

*"I remember when I was a child, people never asked me about boyfriends, and I saw them talking about that with my friends. Now that I'm older, nobody thinks that I am bisexual or even that I have relationships. Even the LGBTIQ+ community still fails to include disabled people, and I feel like I don't belong."
 (Manuela, 23 years old, Portugal)*

*"When I go out with my friends, there is always someone who comes to me telling me that I'm an inspiration for being there, having fun, and dancing, like disabled people cannot just enjoy life. On the other hand, my friends are seen as incredible human beings for taking me to the disco (as if I needed to be taken)..."
 (Francisco, 19 years old, Portugal)*

*"I am in a wheelchair. And once I wanted to go to the theatre. When we got in front of the building, we saw that it had the metal bridges for wheelchairs, but it didn't really fit into mine, so my friend had to help me to get me upstairs. Then when we were inside my wheelchair didn't fit the elevator. I asked what I should do and the staff told me I need to ask for help from other people."
 (Slovak, girl, 20)*

*"I have a mild speech impairment. I need a bit more time to respond. After I finished school, my friends told me the Lithuanian teacher used to skip me, saying I was wasting time. I'm just glad school is over."
 (Lithuania, girl, 19)*

*"I had a broken bone and I went to the doctor with my partner. Instead that doctor should talk to me, he was explaining to my partner what I should do with my leg and how to treat it. The same happened twice with 2 different doctors. I felt really powerless and ignored. My partner was there just as my support, and they turned the responsibility to them."
 (Slovak, non-binary)*



Ageism | **Disabilities** | Gender Equality | LGBTQI+ | Migration | Racism

SESSION PLANNING

Activity n° 1

Myth-busting quiz - Positive Activist Wallpaper

Goal: Identify and deconstruct stereotypes about disability and LGBTQI+ identities.

Duration: 35 m

Prepare beforehand: Leave all the chairs in one place so that participants can take them (those who need them) and choose where they want to be seated, forming a semi-circle; wallpaper with length taped or white board, thick coloured pens, printed activity, pages with printed phrases or slides to project.

Instructions:

1. **10'** Distribute or show (in a projection) and read the stereotypical phrases:
 - a. Disabled people are best suited to unskilled work.
 - b. Disabled people are less productive.
 - c. Disabled people will not fit in.
 - d. People in wheelchairs don't have sex or cannot conceive children.
 - e. Disabled people are fragile.
 - f. Disabled people need to be protected.
 - g. Disabled people are an inspiration.
 - h. Independent living is not for everyone. Institutions will always be necessary.
2. **10'** ask each person to transform the sentences into representative/inclusive messages and write it down.
3. **15'** Ask people to say their alternative sentences and vote for the most positive
4. **5'** write them down in the wallpaper (or white board).



TIPS/NOTES:

- **Prepare inclusive sentences** as examples to help if needed:
 - "Disabled people can thrive in all kinds of work, including skilled and leadership roles."
 - "Disabled people are equally productive when provided with accessible and inclusive environments, as well as adaptations according to their specific needs."
 - "Disabled people belong to every community that can include them and see their true selves."
 - "People who use wheelchairs have fulfilling sexual lives and can become parents if they choose."
 - "Disabled people are as strong, resilient, and capable as anyone else if they have the same opportunities and resources."
 - "Disabled people have the right to self-determination, making decisions about their lives and experiences"
 - "Disabled people are not inspirations just for living their lives."
 - "Independent living is a right for all disabled people, as well as community-based services."
- You can display the wallpaper in the school or community center. Give it a nice title such as **"Get a new perspective about disabled people"**.
- If you have more time, you can also **divide the group into smaller groups**, creating another level of reflection.



Ageism | **Disabilities** | Gender Equality | LGBTQI+ | Migration | Racism

SESSION PLANNING

Activity n° 2

Anonymously asking

Goal: To promote understanding, empathy, and critical reflection on issues related to disability, sexual diversity, gender identity, and gender expression, through an accessible and safe format.

Duration: 5 to 15 m (depending on the session time and the amount of questions)

Prepare beforehand: A box, papers and pens; or alternatively online in a Q&A platform (as Mentimeter), QR code, Wifi connection.

Instructions:

- During the session (or beforehand), participants are invited to **anonymously submit questions** about disability and LGBTQI+ topics.
- **You can use a physical question box or a digital platform**, allowing interactivity and anonymity.
- The facilitator(s), with sensitivity, knowledge, and active listening skills, **answer the questions in a clear, informed, and respectful way**. Whenever possible, answers can spark structured debate, allowing participants to share experiences, reflections, or additional questions.

SESSION PLANNING

Training team: Luna and Matilde		Where & When: School in Lithuania, November 2025		Topic: DISABILITIES	
Goal:	Challenge and deconstruct stereotypes and prejudice against disabled people.			Session n°:	1
Target group:	Mainly young people, to 15 to 20 people			Total Duration:	1h
Steps:	Contents to develop	Activities	Resources needed	Duration	
INTRODUCTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome everyone • Establish ground rules of respect, confidentiality, and active listening • Summarise the session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask people to grab a chair (if they need it) and sit in a circle or U shape • write "rules" on the white board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White Board • pen 	10'	
DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dynamize the activity; • Answer some questions that might arise; • Reflection in the group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity "Myth-busting quiz - Positive Activist Wallpaper" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Printed exercise • Cards/slides • Wallpaper • Tape • Pens • Papers 	35'	
CONCLUSION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions and final reflection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anonymous asking and final reflection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Box / QR Code • Pens • Papers 	5' to 15'	



6.3. Gender Equality

BASIC CONCEPTS

[Important words in glossary: **Discrimination; Human Rights; Intersectionality; Lesbian; Prejudice**]

Gender equality refers to the state in which all people are treated equally, regardless of gender, having equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities in all aspects of life. Due to gender-based stereotypes, constructed and implemented by society, challenges such as wage gaps, unequal representation in leadership, and gender-based violence persist, especially towards women.

Gender inequality persists everywhere and stagnates social progress.

Check out the data:



EU law guarantees gender equality, and the Istanbul Convention recognizes gender-based violence as a Human Rights violation.

Despite improvements in some areas, the promise of a world in which every woman and girl enjoys full gender equality, and where all legal, social and economic barriers to their empowerment have been removed, remains unfulfilled.

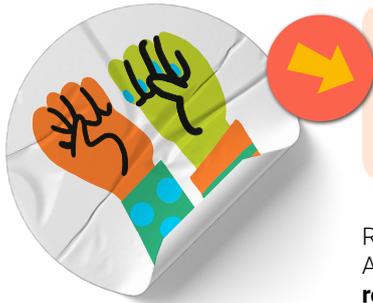


Ageism | Disabilities | **Gender Equality** | LGBTQ+ | Migration | Racism

Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a **necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world**. There has been progress over the last decades, but...

If you realise: **women and girls represent half of the world's population and therefore... also half of its potential!**

Therefore, gender equality is also a precondition for advancing development and reducing poverty:



empowered women contribute to the health and productivity of entire families and communities, improving prospects for the next generation

Regardless of where you live, gender equality is a fundamental human right. Advancing **gender equality is critical to all areas of a healthy society, from reducing poverty to promoting the health, education, protection and the well-being of girls, boys and everyone.**



STEREOTYPES AND PREJUDICES

To help accelerate gender equality, we can deconstruct stereotypes of gender roles in our daily lives.

Gender is often confused with "sex" (that is usually used to refer to female or male biology or anatomy). But Gender is a social construction, which means that it refers to social attributes that are learned or acquired during socialisation as a member of a given community. When growing up and living in our society, we learn ideas that people generally attribute to men and women, like what a woman is supposed to do or look like, what a man can do or not do. That differs from one region to another, from one time in history to another, from one country to another, showing us that gender is a social and cultural construction, that refers to the socially given **attributes, roles, activities, responsibilities and needs connected with that perception in a given society of what is a man and what is a woman.**

These roles and expectations built around gender often limit opportunities and reinforce stereotypes.

Some gender roles are:

- **Role of Women in the Family and Domestic Work**

It's still usually expected of women to take care of others, whether it's their children, husband, parents, or someone else. Domestic work is often considered a labour of love, the value of which is founded upon the assumption that women are 'natural' carers and nurturers, a result of centuries of being at home and restricted to family and domestic work. That gender stereotype and bias only leads to gender inequalities. Women do more invisible and unpaid work, doing like a "second shift" at home, which leads to more inequality.

- **Role of Men as Breadwinners**

For centuries, it was created the idea that men had to provide all the earnings for the family. That was their primary responsibility, distancing them from the family sphere and care and conditioning the woman to this role. This stereotype creates psychological pressure, and can have a very negative impact on men and families, rejecting themselves as emotional and caring beings.

- **Gender Roles in Professional Life** (Men as Leaders, Women in Supportive Roles)

There's that saying "Behind a great man, there's a great woman" that clearly translates this stereotype. This idea of "natural leadership" in men leads to an underrepresentation of women in management positions, in higher-level strategic decision-making functions.

- **Gendered Expectations in Childcare**
Dolls for girls, cars for boys, pink for girls, blue for boys. Sounds familiar? At an early age, children are learning how to behave and what society expects of them. When adults, and society in general, give different toys or colours, when we treat them differently because of their gender, they will appropriate these stereotypes and follow them throughout their lives, with barriers that limit and determinate their behaviour.
- **Sexualization of Women's Bodies**
Sexualization means that a person's value comes only from their sexual appeal or behaviour to the exclusion of other characteristics. That leads to sexually objectification that undermines women and can lead to sexual violence and its relativization. Unrealistic ideas of attractiveness can also increase body dissatisfaction, creating mental and body health issues.
- **Masculine Norms of Aggression and Emotional Resilience**
Aggressor or protector, that binary vision of men is still present today. That they hold the power before the "weaker sex". Such a reductionist view denies the complexity of the concept of masculinity and leads to an oversimplification of reality. That idea of toughness, rejection of supposed "feminine" traits (as emotions or accepting help) and relevance given to "power" lead to a toxic masculinity that is very harmful for men and society.
- **Heteronormativity and Binary Gender Roles**
Heteronormativity assumes that everyone is heterosexual, failing to see other relationship models. By reproducing a binary model to homosexual relations for instance, it reduces relationships to a conventional model of man and woman or dominant and submissive roles. "Who's the man/woman in your relationship?" is a common bias question, that in most couples reality doesn't make any sense.

Fighting stereotypes and prejudices for true equality

Feminism fights for equal rights for everyone. **Intersectional feminism** shows how people can experience several forms of discrimination at the same time. For example: a Muslim black lesbian woman may experience islamophobia, racism, homophobia and misogyny, all combined. Part of that intersectionality, transfeminism analyses how transphobia and sexism are intertwined.

USE REAL EXPERIENCES

STORIES OF DISCRIMINATION

"We were making noise in class, but the teacher only gave a warning to me and my friends: 'You're girls, so act like it.'"
(Lithuania, girl, 15)

"When I said I'm a feminist, my friends laughed and asked if I'm a 'f*got'. That's their understanding of gender equality."
(Lithuania, boy, 18)

"I grew up with a brother and all my cousins were boys. I was the only girl and all the family treated me differently, but the worst was my grandmother, who insisted on giving me domestic chores while my brother and cousins were playing."
(Portugal, girl, 16)

"I remember having an oral test at my university with my teacher. After I answered all of the questions, the teacher gave me a D, after which they said that they are expecting me to be more smart as I am a "male". I felt weird, because it put me in a situation where I didn't know what to answer and that I am not smart enough. And also I felt sorry for my female classmates, that the teacher is thinking they are not smart enough as my male classmates and that it could create biases within any tests."
(Slovak, boy 19)

"When I decided to study to be a nurse, some friends ask me if I didn't want to be a medical doctor instead, because nurses should be women."
(Portugal, man, 20)

"In our class there are many female students skilled in sciences (maths, physics or chemistry), whose knowledge is heavily overlooked, just because those subjects are (subconsciously?) considered as "manly" or the ones that only boys can excel at. My classmates were not chosen to represent our school in science-based competitions, even though they voiced their interest. Since only boys participated, I assume they were ignored because they are girls, therefore it was a very sexist and unfair situation that made me feel disappointed and upset."
(Slovak, woman, 17)



Ageism | Disabilities | **Gender Equality** | LGBTQ+ | Migration | Racism

SESSION PLANNING

Activity

“Favourite character or hero/heroine”

Goal: Deconstruct stereotypes and social roles of men and women.

Duration: 1h

Prepare beforehand: chairs, tables, white board + pens (blue, red and green or black), printed activity, 1 paper per person, 1 pen per person. On the board, draw 2 columns and write women (in red) and men (in blue) on top of each column and draw 2 lines - one will be for the chosen names and the other for the characteristics.

Instructions:

1. **5'** Hand out the paper and pens and ask each person to draw 2 columns and 3 lines.
2. **10'** Give people five minutes to think about which favourite character or heroes (national or international) they particularly admire, one man, one woman. Can be fictional, historical or living.
 - i. In **one column** they should write:
 - the name of one **women character**
 - a brief description of **who they are and what they did**.
 - Underneath they should write **key words to describe the characteristics** they associate with heroines in general.
 - ii. In the **second column**, repeat the process for the **man character**.
3. **15'** Now ask the participants to get into groups of between 3 or 4 people to share their choices. Ask the groups to come to a consensus on the worthiest heroine and the worthiest hero.
4. **15'** Now come into plenary and write the names of the groups chosen heroines and heroes in two columns on the white board (females and males). Add the keywords that describe the characteristics.
5. **20'** Discuss the list of characteristics and the use of heroines and heroes as role models and the extent to which they are gender stereotypes. Here go some ideas, use them wisely with the time you've got:
 - a. What kind of people are heroines and heroes? (Ordinary men and women? Kings?) What did they do? (Fight? Write poems?) How did the participants learn about them?
 - b. What were the differences and similarities between the two lists of characteristics?
 - c. Do you personally, and people in your society in general, have general stereotypes and expectations of men and women?
 - d. What gender-related barriers have participants experienced? At home, school, club or work place? What strategies can we use to break away from cultural norms and values related to masculinity and femininity?
 - e. What do they think about the colours for males and females on the board? You can also change the order and ask how people feel. Erase 'man' & 'woman' on the board and ask what could you write instead ('people', for example) and write it in another colour. Where do non-binary fit for instance and where are their role models?
6. **10'** Ask each person to share 1 thing that they can do from now on to deconstruct stereotypes in their daily life. Here go some examples of actions that one can do:
 - a. be more aware of stereotyping in your daily life, especially that which leads to prejudice, both by others and (inadvertently!) by yourself.
 - b. Find out about women who have contributed to your country (the world, if you are working in an international context) but who are not so well known. Organise an exhibition in your school or youth club. You could also write an article for a local newspaper or make a short video to post on the Internet about these women.
 - c. Organise a celebration to mark International Women's Day.
 - d. Join local, national or international campaigns about women's issues,

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for instance, about equal pay for equal work, trafficking or equal access to education for children worldwide.

e. If you identify as a girl, you can stay in school, help empower your girlfriends to do the same and fight for your right to access sexual and reproductive health services. If you are a woman, you can address unconscious biases and implicit associations that form an unintended and often an invisible barrier to equal opportunity.

f. If you are a man or a boy, you can work alongside women and girls to achieve gender equality and embrace healthy, respectful relationships.

g. You can fund education campaigns to curb cultural practices like female genital mutilation and change harmful laws that limit the rights of women and girls and prevent them from achieving their full potential.



TIPS/NOTES:

- The words 'heroine' and 'hero' are perceived differently in different societies. Be aware of this and take care to introduce the meaning carefully, it may be useful to underline that heroines and heroes are role models.
- At point 4 in the instructions, you should accept all contributions from the small groups and write everything onto the white board. If someone suggests terms like "feminine" or "masculine" you should accept them at this stage and return to them in the debriefing when you should discuss the meanings of these words.
- This activity involves a lot of sharing and writing on the flipchart takes time. You can limit participation to 2 or 3 people for each question if you feel time is starting to be an issue.

SESSION PLANNING

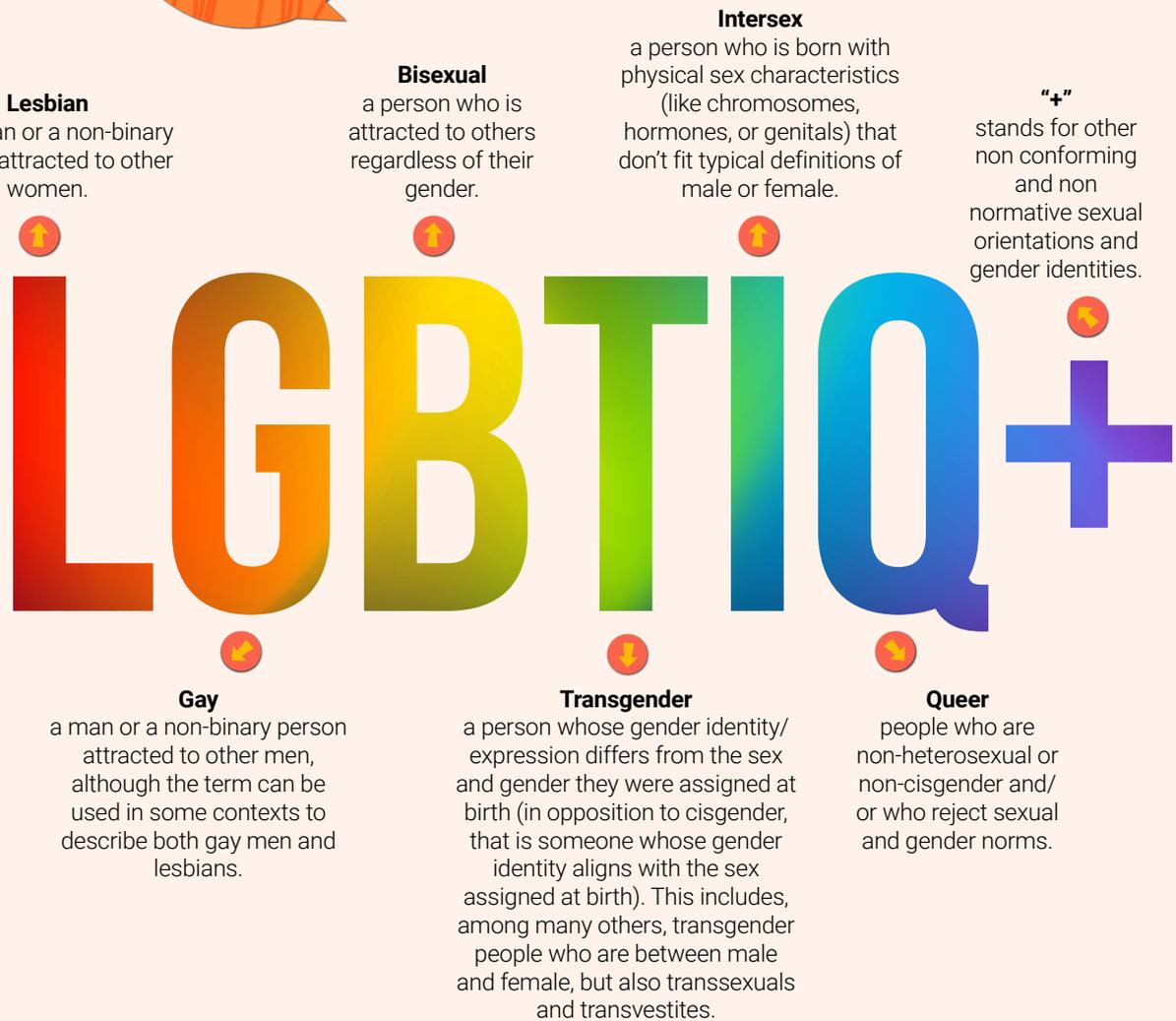
Training team: Margarida and Martin		Where & When: Rainbow Challenge Training, Jan 2025		Topic: GENDER EQUALITY	
Goal:	Deconstruct the stereotypes and social roles of men and women.			Session n°:	1
Target group:	Young people and a few adults, around 18 people.			Total Duration:	90 minutes
Steps:	Contents to develop	Activities	Resources needed	Duration	
INTRODUCTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome everyone • Go through the objective of the session. 	–	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Printed session preparation 	10'	
DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dynamize the activity; • Answer some questions that might arise; • Time for final reflection in the group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity "Favourite character or hero/heroine" • Questioning for final reflection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Printed exercise file; • Papers; • 1 pen/person; • Blue pen and red/pink pen for board • Board or flipchart. 	60'	
CONCLUSION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarize all contents learned; • Give time for questions; • Final reflection question. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final question: Ask each person to share 1 thing that they can do from now on to deconstruct stereotypes in their daily life. 	–	20'	

6.4. LGBTIQ+

BASIC CONCEPTS

[Important words in glossary: **Advocacy; Bisexual; Discrimination; Empathy; Gay; Human Rights; Intersectionality; Intersex; Lesbian; Prejudice; Stereotypes; Transgender**]

The acronym **LGBTIQ+** stands for

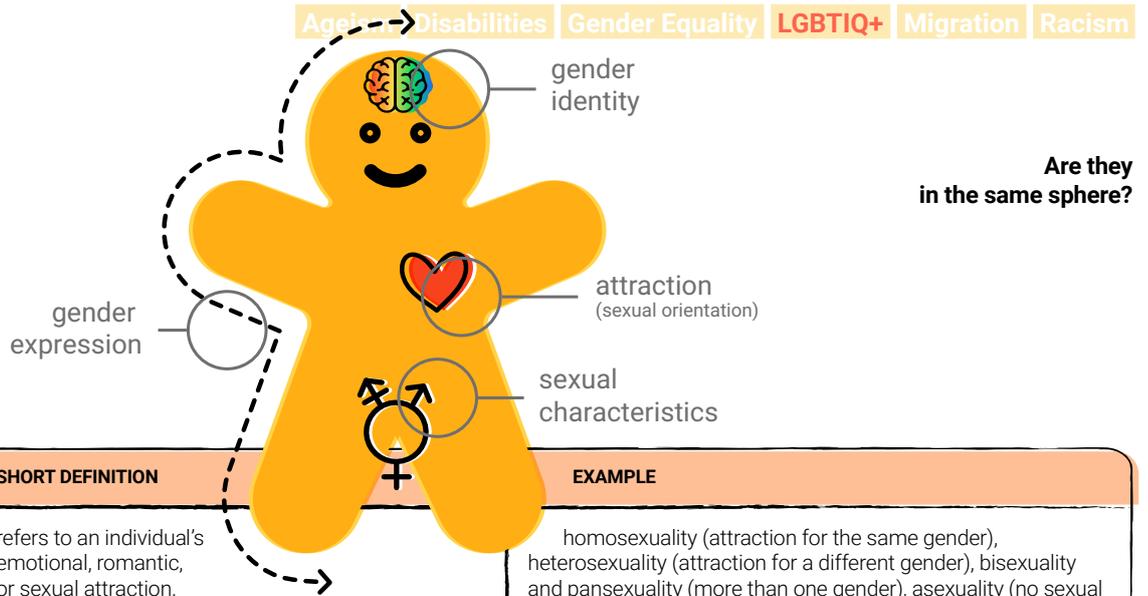


These concepts and categories are important because they:

- Create a common language;
- Capture reality at a wider scope;
- Develop positive identities;
- Give visibility to the specificities of socially discriminated and invisible groups.

However, we should:

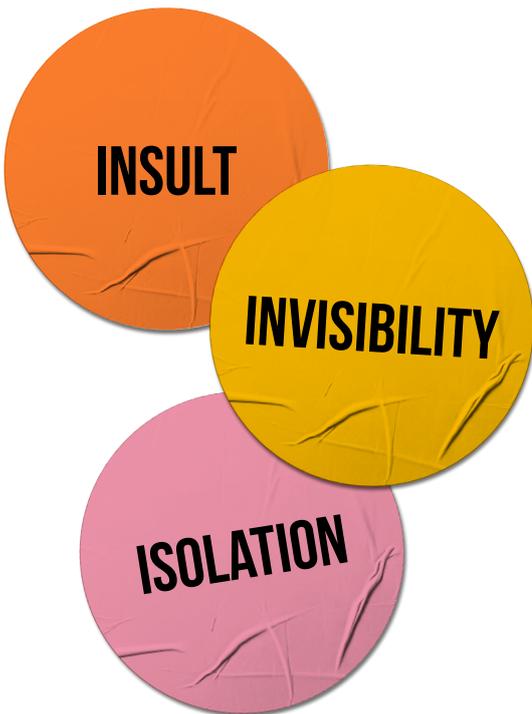
- Not reduce people to categories;
- Comprehend the plasticity and possible overlay and/or evolution of the concepts;
- Respect how people identify themselves.



CONCEPT	SHORT DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
Sexual orientation	refers to an individual's emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction.	homosexuality (attraction for the same gender), heterosexuality (attraction for a different gender), bisexuality and pansexuality (more than one gender), asexuality (no sexual attraction), aromantic (no romantic attraction), demisexuality (sexual attraction only when there is an emotional bond), etc.
Gender identity	is how someone feels and understands their own gender, which may or may not match the sex/gender they were assigned at birth.	Is not necessarily binary (woman or man), may include a range of gender identities, like non-binary.
Gender expression	is how someone presents one's gender outwards and visibly, aligning or not with traditional concepts of femininity or masculinity.	behaviours, clothing, hairstyle, mannerisms, etc.
Sexual characteristics	are the physical traits normally assigned at birth that typically distinguish male and female bodies. There is natural variation among individuals beyond the binary female/male, as some people are born intersexual.	genitalia, reproductive organs, chromosomes, genes, and hormones.

SPECIFICITIES OF DISCRIMINATION ON LGBTIQ+ COMMUNITIES

The triad **insult - invisibility - isolation** resumes the complexity of this type of discrimination.



Insult

For ages, the only words used for addressing non-heterosexual and non-gender conforming people were (and still are sometimes) insults, making LGBTIQ+ feel from an early age that their identity is something "wrong" or "immoral" creating internalized homophobia/transphobia/biphobia/... LGBTIQ+ people fight that insult scenario, by reclaiming pride instead of shame.

Invisibility

Because it's not a visible characteristic, a LGBTIQ+ person is only recognized or identified as so if they externalize it. Society assumes heterosexuality and cis gender as the norm, adding the need of "coming out of the closet" by a LGBTIQ+ person to fully thrive in their identities. In many cases, people remain invisible, simply because society makes it so difficult to break the norm. LGBTIQ+ people fight that invisibility, when they break the normative assumptions and try to live freely and visible in their identities.

Isolation

LGBTIQ+ people do not develop and grow, in most cases, in contact or in a community of LGBTIQ+ people. In many cases, they think there's no one like them precisely because there's a tendency to be invisible. That contributes to considerable isolation. LGBTIQ+ have the need to search for "equal" others and creating a sense of community allows the development of positive identities, realizing that who you are is not an impediment for success or happiness.

Ageism | Disabilities | Gender Equality | **LGBTIQ+** | Migration | Racism

Discrimination Experienced by LGBTIQ+ Youth in Europe

LGBTIQ+ people have faced significant discrimination and persecution throughout history. Historically, homosexuality was considered a mental illness, criminalized in many countries, and often linked to harmful stereotypes. Despite progress in many regions, individuals identifying as LGBTIQ+ still encounter challenges in accessing equal rights and safe spaces, struggling with social, institutional, family, healthcare, religious, cultural, intersectional, economic and legal discrimination.

This discrimination is many times based in basic emotions, as:

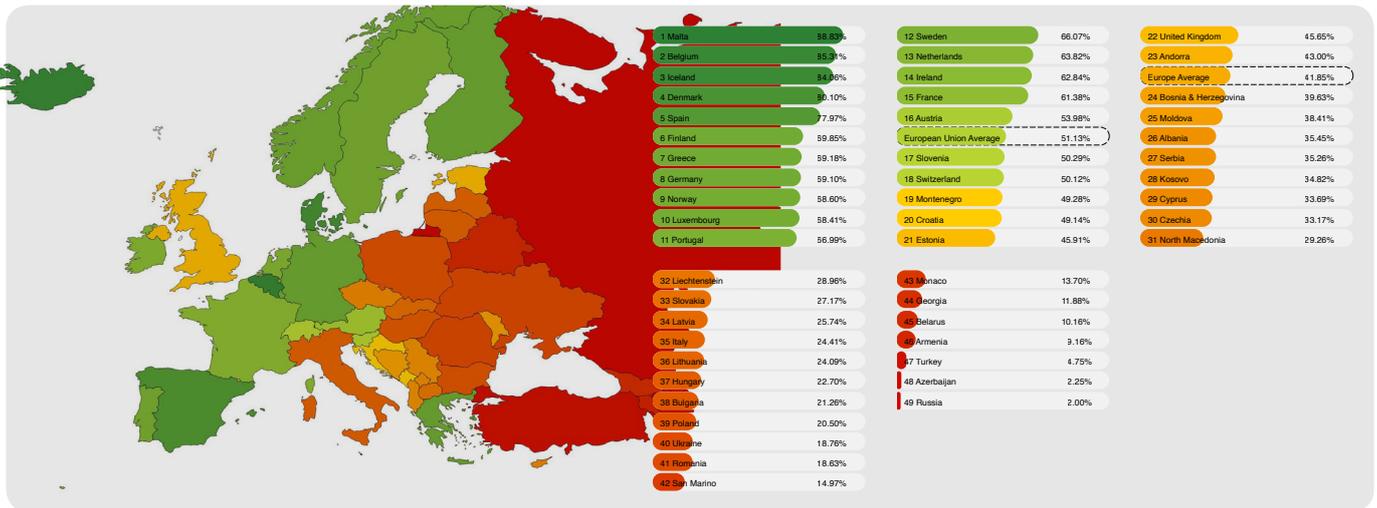
Transphobia - the irrational fear of and aversion to trans people based on prejudice.

Homophobia - the irrational fear of and aversion to homosexuality andLGB people based on prejudice.

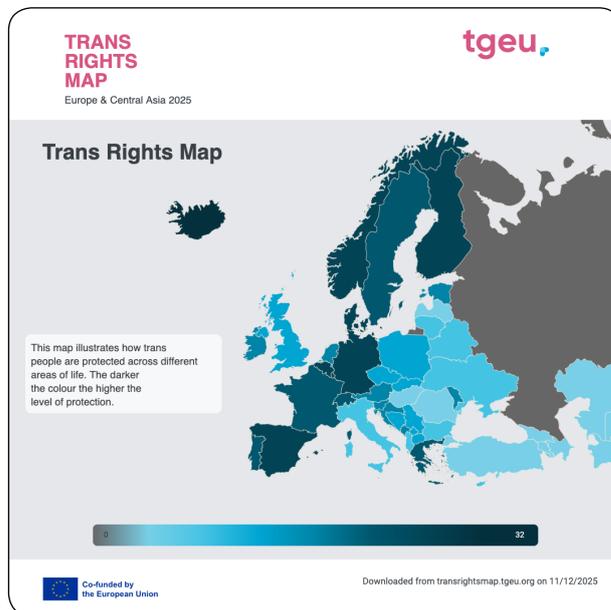
Interphobia or intersexphobia - irrational fear of and aversion to intersex people based on prejudice.

Check the [Rainbow Map](#), developed by ILGA Europe, to see the ranking of 49 European countries on their respective legal and policy practices for LGBTIQ+ people. To see more detailed information regarding Trans Rights in 54 countries (Europe and Central Asia), also check the [Trans Rights Map & Index](#), developed by TGEU.

**2025
Rainbow Map Scores**



**Trans Rights
Map & Index**





STEREOTYPES AND PREJUDICES

Stereotypes and prejudices towards LGBTIQ+ people still exist in today's societies, even in Europe, often rooted in cultural, religious, and social norms that stigmatize non-normative sexual orientations and gender identities. These stereotypes and prejudices contribute to discrimination and marginalization, and can significantly impact the mental and physical health of LGBTIQ+ individuals.

What stereotypes and prejudices still exist?

"It's unnatural"

One of the most persistent stereotypes is that their sexual orientation or gender identity is "unnatural" or "against nature". This stereotype is often perpetuated by conservative religious groups, as well as traditionalist cultural norms.

"It's a disease"

Historically, homosexuality and transgenderism was considered a mental disorder or a psychological instability, and although this view has been widely discredited, it still influences attitudes toward LGBTIQ+ people in some regions, where the violent "conversion practices" are legally undertaken. What affects mental health is homophobia and transphobia and not one's sexual orientation or gender identity.

"You're just Confused"

LGBTIQ+ people are often stereotyped as confused or deceptive, "going through a phase" or being dishonest about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

"Threat to Children"

In some European countries, LGBTIQ+ people are accused of being a threat to children, often through the association with "grooming" or "paedophilia", even in political discourse. Even learning about LGBTIQ+ identities is often portrayed as "indoctrination", an attempt to "recruit" children and youth and a threat to traditional family structures.



THE ROLE OF ALLIES

Promoting LGBTIQ+ rights is not only important for those directly affected, but also for society as a whole. **Allies - people who support the LGBTIQ+ community** - play a crucial role in challenging homophobia, transphobia, and other forms of discrimination. Advocating for policy changes, supporting LGBTIQ+ events like Pride marches, and creating inclusive spaces are vital ways of contributing to the fight for equality.

Understanding the LGBTIQ+ community, their challenges, and their rights is an essential part of fostering a more inclusive and just society. It requires recognizing the diversity within the community and combating the prejudices and barriers that hinder the full recognition of their human rights.



The LGBTIQ+ rights movement is fundamentally about ensuring equal rights and opportunities for everyone, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or expression. It is rooted in the principles of human dignity, equality, and freedom from discrimination.

USE REAL EXPERIENCES

Ageism | Disabilities | Gender Equality | **LGBTIQ+** | Migration | Racism

STORIES OF DISCRIMINATION

*"When I started hiding myself less, classmates began whispering and laughing. They called me a 'd*ke' almost every day. The teachers pretended not to hear."
(Lithuania, lesbian girl, 17)*

*"While attending elementary school, I was bullied for manifesting characteristics commonly associated with homosexual men, but I had the support and protection of friends."
(Portugal, Gay man, 23)*

*"I think I am not very discriminated against because I rarely have a public affective relationship with women and do not disclose my sexual orientation. People just assume I'm straight and I don't object. I only share the truth with close people."
(Portugal, Bisexual woman, 25)*

*"When I was going to elementary school, I was bullied for primarily being friends with girls and showing no interest in conventionally masculine things, which has led me to isolate myself and not see myself fully as a person, and it'd been so until late years of high school when I'd learned to mask my femininity and find a group of friends."
(Slovakia, gay man, 19)*

*"At school they laughed at me for looking 'too girly'. During PE, the teacher said: 'Maybe you should do dance instead of basketball?' The whole class laughed. That day, I ran away from school."
(Lithuania, queer boy, 15 years old)*

*"I was always very afraid to come out of the closet to my 95-year-old great-grandmother, thinking I was going to get a negative response. To my surprise, she told me that what mattered was that I was happy."
(Portugal, Non-binary person, 15)*

*"While I was spending time with my queer friends at a café, a group of older men overheard our conversation and began shouting homophobic slurs at us, which forced us to leave the place."
(Slovakia, Lesbian, 22 years old)*

MAKE IT WORK!



Download the **Rainbow Challenge app**
Androids [here](#) and iPhones [here](#)

SESSION PLANNING

Activity n°1

Icebreaker from Rainbow Challenge App

Goal: evaluate what the group knows of the topic and introducing the project app

Duration: 10 minutes

Prepare beforehand: QR code (projected or printed) for app download ([App store](#); [Google play](#))

Instructions: Ask people to download the app and choose one of the quizzes available in the "Challenges" directory. Give them a few minutes and ask the group what were the difficulties to address them later.

Activity n°2

"Take a stand!!" Energizer

Goal: To discuss and deconstructing existing LGBTIQ+ stereotypes

Duration: 20 minutes

Prepare beforehand:

- Big space for people to move around
- Sentences printed so you can read them
- Papers with 'I agree' and 'I disagree' to mark the space
- Place/tape the papers on the floor, walls or chairs

Ageism | Disabilities | Gender Equality | **LGBTIQ+** | Migration | Racism

Instructions:

- Read one statement at a time.
- Participants move to the side of the room that reflects their opinion (“I agree” / “I disagree”).
- Invite 1–2 volunteers from each side to explain their choice.
- Keep the discussion open – don’t judge answers, just provide clarifications if needed.

Example statements (choose 6–8 strongest ones):

- “Bisexuality doesn’t exist – people are just confused.”
- “Lesbians and gays have the same parenting skills as straight people.”
- “Only women menstruate.”
- “It’s possible to be happy, Catholic, and gay.”
- “LGBTIQ+ people have more mental health problems.”
- “Gay men are generally more fun than straight men.”
- “Deep down, no LGBTIQ+ person is fully happy if not completely out.”
- “Boys and girls are naturally different.”



TIPS/NOTES:

- Use fewer sentences if the group is large or very talkative.
- Select the statements most relevant for the local context.
- End with a short reflection: **“How did it feel to take a stand? Did any answers surprise you?”**

Activity nº3

“Giant Person”

Goal: To consolidate understanding of sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual characteristics, and to reflect on the importance of allies and peer support.

Duration: 20 minutes

Prepare beforehand: Large sheet of paper (about 2m x 1m) with a drawn “Genderbread/Gingerbread person,” thick pens, tape, scissors, sentences (of the same number of the participants).

Instructions:

1. **2’** Place the “Giant Person” on the floor and ask the group to stand next to it.
2. **10’** Read simple sentences and ask each participant at a time to stand on the part of the figure they think the sentence relates to (heart = sexual orientation, head = identity, outside = expression, body = sex characteristics)
 - Examples of sentences:**
 - i. I’m in love with a boy from school. (Sexual Orientation)
 - ii. I don’t feel like a man or a woman. (Gender Identity)
 - iii. I like to wear dresses. (Gender Expression)
 - iv. I have a penis. (Sexual Characteristics)
 - v. I use long hair. (GE)
 - vi. I’m attracted to girls and boys. (SO)
 - vii. My sex organ is a vulva. (SC)
 - viii. We are very feminine. (GE)
 - ix. I’m a man. (GI)
 - x. She’s a trans woman. (GI)
 - xi. I’m pansexual. (SO)
 - xii. My pronouns are they/them. (GI)
3. As more people join, they need to fit together on the paper, showing cooperation and inclusion.

END REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

How did it feel to work together and find space for everyone?
 What does this say about collaboration, empathy, and inclusion?
 The importance of find spaces where everyone belongs and can be together as themselves.
Connect the activity to the importance of allies and safe spaces!



TIPS/NOTES:

- Use this only if the group is comfortable with physical closeness.
- Make sure that the paper is big enough (but not too big) for all people to have space, the idea is to collaborate to fit all.

SESSION PLANNING

Training team: Margarida and Martin		Where & When: Rainbow Challenge training, Slovakia		Topic: LGBTIQ+	
Goal:	Reflect on LGBTIQ+ stereotypes and learn basic concepts			Session n°:	1
Target group:	A group of young people that know each other and know me.			Total Duration:	1h10
Steps:	Contents to develop	Activities	Resources needed	Duration	
INTRODUCTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go through the objective; • Use the Rainbow Challenge app to pre-evaluate what the group knows of the topic; • Activity energizer: make the group discuss prejudices about the topic; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rainbow Challenge app • Dynamic Take a stand! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Printed session preparation 	30'	
DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sexual characteristics while positioning yourself in the 'Giant person' paper on floor; • Explain the 3 I's and the importance of peer support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expose theory using questioning; • Start of activity "genderbread" on the floor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Printed theory; • Printed exercise file; • Paper 2mx1m; • Thick pens; tape and scissors 	20'	
CONCLUSION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarize all contents learned; • Give time for questions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity "genderbread" on the floor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as above. 	20'	

6.5. Migration

BASIC CONCEPTS

[Important words in glossary: **Discrimination; Empathy; Human Rights; Prejudice; Universal Declaration of Human Rights**]



Migration is a phenomenon that occurs across the globe and has shaped human civilizations through trade, exploration, and globalization. People leave their countries for many different reasons. **In Europe, migration intensified due to war, violence, natural disasters, human rights violations,** search of better **work** opportunities or access to **education**.

About **1 in 20 people** living in the EU is not from an EU country. That's around **23 million people!** These are individuals who moved for work, safety, or a better life, much like many students studying abroad or people looking for exciting opportunities.

1 in 10 young people (aged 15–29) in the EU comes from a migrant background. Many of them share the same dreams and challenges as local youth: finishing school, finding a job, and building a future.



VOLUNTARY

Refers to the **movement of people from one place to another by their own choice**, typically in search of better opportunities, improved living conditions, or personal reasons. For example, a doctor moving to another country seeking better work conditions or getting married to a person from a different country.

FORCED

It is the **involuntary movement of people** from their homes due to circumstances beyond their control. It is usually the result of war, human rights violations, natural disasters and persecution. For example, a person from Ukraine running from the Russian attacks.

INTERNAL

Refers to the **movement of people within the same country**, either temporarily or permanently and it can be voluntary or forced. For example, Palestinian citizens are being displaced internally to escape the effects of the Israeli attacks.

INTERNATIONAL

Refers to the **movement of people across national borders** to reside in a different country, either temporarily or permanently. For example, someone seeking better living conditions.



The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) states that everyone has the right to seek asylum and to be protected from torture or inhuman treatment.

The Refugee Convention (1951) defines who is a refugee and what rights one has as such. Refugee status is granted when people face persecution based on race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or belonging to a particular social group (for example LGBTQ+ people in countries where their lives and rights are threatened or criminalized).

EVERY TWO MINUTES, SOMEONE SEEKS SAFETY IN EUROPE BECAUSE THEY CAN'T LIVE SAFELY IN THEIR COUNTRY.

THERE ARE OVER 4 MILLION REFUGEES IN THE EU.

FIGHT THE CLICHÉS

MYTHS CREATED BY XENOPHOBIA VS. FACTS:

FROM ASYLUM SEEKER TO REFUGEE

An asylum seeker is someone **who has left their home country** and is **seeking international protection** in another country. In 2023, over **1 million people** applied for asylum in the EU.

Someone becomes a **refugee** when the State that receives the request grants them that status, compromising to protect that person from that threat and giving them asylum.

Europe receives many asylum seekers, who attempt to reach its territory by various means, including boats and planes. The majority come from countries such as **Syria, Afghanistan and Turkey**. In 2023, Germany, Spain, France and Italy respectively were the countries that received the most asylum seekers, while **Hungary and Slovakia received the fewest**.

STEREOTYPES AND PREJUDICES

Stereotypes and prejudices against migrants are widespread across the world, and most of those are based on **xenophobia, racism and ethnocentrism**.

Xenophobia is a **fear or dislike of people** from other countries or cultures, often leading to discrimination, prejudice and misinformation. Xenophobia has deep sociopolitical roots, exacerbated by:

- **economic uncertainty** - competition for jobs, housing, or resources;
- **media narratives** - sensationalist or biased reporting that amplifies negative stereotypes;
- **political rhetoric** - some leaders exploit xenophobic sentiment to gain support by framing migrants as threats.

The impacts of xenophobia can be profound in the people who feel it and in society:

- **social division, segregation and mistrust**, weakening community cohesion;
- **economic loss**, as discrimination marginalises capable individuals from contributing to the economy;
- and **psychological harm**, as it affects the mental health and well-being of migrants, leading to trauma and PTSD, isolation and identity challenges.

MYTH	FACT
<i>"Migrants are coming to 'steal' our jobs."</i>	Many migrants take on jobs that local citizens are unwilling or unable to take, particularly in sectors such as agriculture, construction, catering and healthcare. Equally important, migrants also contribute significantly to the economy by paying taxes, setting up businesses, and spending money in local communities.
<i>"They are trying to change our culture."</i>	Migrants might be unfamiliar with the traditions and behaviours of the host society when they arrive. They need time to integrate and stereotypes and prejudices only difficulties the integration. Migrants contribute to making the EU diverse and exciting. Different foods, music, traditions and languages from around the world enrich every European country. Think of kebabs, sushi, hip-hop or K-pop, all influenced by migration! We are the product of many cultures, and European culture will not disappear, just continue to change throughout our lives.
<i>"Migrants commit more crimes and make the country unsafe."</i>	There is no proven link between migration and the increase of crime rates. The fear of the unfamiliar, a poor or unconventional appearance, can give rise to the misconception that immigration leads to more crime. However, an EU funded report reviewing multiple studies found no evidence that migration increases crime.
<i>"The country should just help its citizens."</i>	Helping citizens is important, and supporting migrants and refugees, who are part of our country and society, does not mean we are neglecting anyone else. If the country promotes inclusive policies, it will strengthen communities, boost the economy, create more opportunities for everyone, and foster a deeper sense of community.



Migrants and refugees don't burden public services. Instead, they contribute through taxes, innovation, and entrepreneurship.

USE REAL EXPERIENCES

Ageism | Disabilities | Gender Equality | LGBTQI+ | Migration | Racism

STORIES OF DISCRIMINATION

"I try to speak Lithuanian, but my accent is noticeable. I often notice some colleagues whispering and mocking me, deliberately using words I've mispronounced. Then they chuckle. I feel very uncomfortable."
(Lithuania, refugee from Iraq, 24)

"At school, after we moved to another town, people kept asking me: 'Where are you from? How did you learn Lithuanian so well?'. When I said I'm Lithuanian, I was born in Lithuania, they laughed: 'But you don't look Lithuanian.'"
(Lithuania, boy with migrant background, 18)

"Sometimes I hear teachers saying 'he doesn't understand, it's different in his country, they are used to living horribly so he doesn't even know how to behave here.' But I know they don't know what they are talking about, they don't know about the culture I was brought up in and they don't even want to know."
(Portugal, Guinean boy, 13)

"Often, when I'm in public places, I hear people badmouthing immigrants and think, 'I'd better not open my mouth so they don't find out I'm Brazilian,' because people usually think you'll only cause trouble. One time, when I misbehaved in class, my teacher went to talk to my mother. I remember hearing her say, 'You Brazilians are all like that, you know?'" and it made me feel guilty, because everyone in my country would be suffering from my reputation."
(Portugal, brazilian boy, 15)

"I was volunteering in Slovakia I am Azerbaijani. When I was on public transport I often felt the looks of people at me. It seemed like they could not label me and were confused about who I was, or where I am from - as my skin color is not 'white enough.' Once I experienced verbal harassment from a random guy on public transport. He started to shout at me 'You're muslim, you should go back to your country, we don't want you here!'. I was pretty scared and it made me even shake a bit afterwards when I got out of the tram."
(Slovakia, boy, 19)

"As a non-EU citizen living in the EU on a temporary residence permit without a legal possibility to visit my home country i have faced multiple challenges and discrimination. Firstly, in Slovakia foreigners don't have the right to be insured for treatment of chronic diseases, and with my limited finances and little support from parents to this day I do not have a possibility to undergo medical examinations treatment of my chronic diseases. Additionally, while seeking treatment from medical specialists I have stumbled upon multiple warnings on their websites that said "we do not accept foreigners". Secondly, similar signs are present at websites of real estate agents, and landlords very often refuse to rent to foreigners. Lastly, minor details, such as not having a community of people with whom you have common interests and a common language, lack of understanding from locals and treatment of myself as a "third world country citizen" with questions like "do you have department stores in your country" are a common thing that I have to deal with constantly."
(Slovakia, boy, 20)

MAKE IT WORK!

SESSION PLANNING

Activity n°1

Fleeing from home

Goal: To reflect on the difficulties of choosing and prioritizing when fleeing home, developing empathy for those circumstances.

Duration: 25 minutes

Prepare beforehand: Pens, post-its, white board and pens

Instructions:

1. Divide the 15 people into 3 groups (5 people per group).
2. **5'** Begin by explaining or brainstorming reasons why people might have to leave their country and write them on the board.
3. **5'** Then explain that each person is being forced to leave their house, and they must choose 3 things to take with them. Give each person one post-it and ask them to write those three things on it.
4. **5'** Within each group, each person shares their things and explains why they chose them.
5. **10'** Then, give 5 minutes to each group to decide on three priority items, nominating a spokesperson to share it with the whole class. After listening to the reasons for their choices, ask 3 people to share insights and feelings.

Ageism | Disabilities | Gender Equality | LGBTQ+ | **Migration** | Racism

Activity n°2

Crossing Borders

Goal: To discuss Migration challenges, reflecting about the fairness of the processes and how that can impact one's emotional and mental health.

Duration: 45 minutes

Prepare beforehand: Printed or written paper cards with different situations and countries, papers, tape, pens, scissors.

Instructions:

1. **10'** Introduce the activity, with this idea in mind: "Imagine that suddenly war breaks out in your country. You are caught in the middle and forced to leave everything behind. Or imagine living in a country where LGBTQ+ people are persecuted or even killed, and you are forced to flee just to stay alive. Then, picture arriving in another country with nothing, starting over from scratch, only to have people look down on you because you are a migrant, an asylum seeker, or a refugee. How would that make you feel?"
After, divide the people into 3 different groups from before (5 people per group). Give each group 1 country card (for example: United States of America, Morocco and Germany).
2. **15'** Give each group 5 different migration situations, such as:
 - a. a family fleeing military conflict;
 - b. a Pakistani man moving in search of better work conditions;
 - c. a trans person fleeing persecution;
 - d. a mother escaping a natural disaster with two children;
 - e. A Zimbabwean woman coming to Europe to get married to a local person.
 Once they read the 5 possible situations, they have to establish a migration policy, deciding whether to accept or reject someone entering the country. Ask each country to tape the policy on a wall.
3. **5'** Each member of each group will take on a role chosen from the list of migration situations, and they will leave their own country to enter the countries created by the other teams. (for example, if a member of the group plays the role of someone from Zimbabwe coming to Europe to get married, will the country allow them to enter?) Have you managed to negotiate entry? Why? Did you face any obstacles (language barrier, border patrol, rejection)? Did you get deported?
4. **15'** If they are deported or rejected, they should go to the middle of the room and wait until someone joins them. If they are accepted, they may enter the country and start a new life.

END REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

How did it feel to be rejected/accepted? What's fair/unfair about these systems? Each of us can play a role in breaking stereotypes and supporting inclusion, so imagine if **everyone treated migrants as neighbours, classmates, or colleagues**, what would that world look like? Even small actions, like standing up to online hate or learning about someone's culture, can make a big difference.



TIPS/NOTES:

- To make the activity more visual, the students may use tape to mark the borders of their countries. They can use the corners of the room to represent the countries.
- People can contextualize their scenario within the current country situation, if they know.

SESSION PLANNING

Ageism | Disabilities | Gender Equality | LGBTQ+ | **Migration** | Racism

Training team: Tânia and Margarida		Where & When: School in Lisbon, 2025		Topic: MIGRATION	
Goal:	To understand the differences between migrants, asylum seekers and refugees To gain insights into their experiences To understand the stereotypes and prejudice against migrants			Session nº:	1
Target group:	Class of 15 young people of 14/15 years old			Total Duration:	1h45
Steps:	Contents to develop	Activities	Resources needed	Duration	
INTRODUCTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief Introduction to the subject that will be discussed and goals Separate groups In the activity nº 1: make them reflect and discuss what should be prioritise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verbal explanation Activity nº1 - Fleeing from home Which things should you take if you are forced to leave your home? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> post its pens 	5'	
				25'	
DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explaining basic concepts on Migration, writing on the board the main concepts/ideas, words Divide into groups Activity nº 2: Make them reflect freely and build up their own perspective on the activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verbal explanation and make some question to see if the group understands what is being said Activity nº2 - Crossing borders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> white board pens printed cards pens, papers, tape and scissors 	20'	
				45'	
CONCLUSION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask on the exercise, what they felt, what came up. Make the groups discuss Write key ideas on the board if needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary of the key ideas of the session with brainstorming Space for questions/sharings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> white board pens 	10'	



6.6. Racism

BASIC CONCEPTS

[Important words in glossary: **Discrimination; Gay; Intersectionality; Prejudice; Privilege; Protest; Social inequality; Stereotypes**]

Racism is a form of discrimination and prejudice that arises from a power structure creating social inequalities based on skin color, granting privileges to some people while marginalizing others.

Modern racism was born in Europe during the invasion and enslavement of African people, creating ideological foundations for exploitation and inequality that persist to this day.

Racism is a power structure that organizes, hierarchizes, and normalizes social inequalities based on skin color, guaranteeing privileges to people considered white and marginalizing non-white populations, especially African and Afro-descendant ones.

The word “racism” originates from the concept of race, which is a social – not biological – construction based on superficial physical characteristics such as skin color, facial features, and hair texture.

ORIGINS OF MODERN RACISM

- ➔ Modern racism emerged with the European colonial invasion, linking slavery to profit and capitalist expansion.
- ➔ The transatlantic slave trade turned African bodies into commodities, legitimizing exploitation based on ideologies of cognitive, economic, religious, and cultural superiority.
- ➔ This process consolidated racism as a pillar of global capitalism, structuring power systems that still shape the contemporary world.

Systemic and Structural Racism

- Racism is rooted in today’s Western society at institutional, political, legal, educational, and social levels.
- It promotes inequalities by:
 - Restricting Black people’s access to social goods such as education and work
 - Associating Black populations with spaces of vulnerability, such as the prison system
- It is a global structure reproduced through policies, technologies, and economic relations. An example of this is technologies and medications that are only tested on Caucasian, male, and European bodies.

Racism and Representation in the Media

- The absence of Black people in soap operas, films, and advertisements contributes to stigmatization and invisibility in daily life.
- When they do appear, they are often represented in subordinate positions, reinforcing negative stereotypes and affecting perceptions of whiteness and Blackness.
- Impact on children:
 - If they only see “white-skinned” heroes and heroines and Black people in prisons, they may internalize ideas of inferiority or devalue their own appearance.

Racism and Aesthetics

- The movies, fashion, and cosmetics industries promote beauty standards that privilege thin, white bodies.
- These standards influence social perception and the self-esteem of Black people, reinforcing discrimination and aesthetic exclusion.

New Forms of Racism

- Algorithmic racism: present in social networks and digital systems.
- Environmental racism: disproportionately affects Black and Indigenous communities, especially in the Global South.
- Sports racism: manifests in insults, exclusions, and hate speech in sports and its media coverage.

Black Lives Matter and Global Mobilization

- Created in 2013 in the USA, it became a landmark in the fight against systemic racism.
- It gained global attention after the murder of George Floyd (2020), gathering millions in protests against:
 - Police violence
 - The persistence of structural racism
- It highlighted the need for international solidarity and effective public policies in favor of Black and Afro-descendant communities.

Hate Speech

Hate speech against Black people on social networks is a form of symbolic and verbal violence that reinforces racism and discrimination. It manifests through insults, stereotypes, offensive jokes, or incitement to violence directed at Black people. This type of content not only affects those targeted emotionally but also contributes to normalizing prejudice in society. Combating hate speech requires awareness, reporting racist content, and promoting anti-racist education so that social media becomes a safer and more respectful space for everyone.



STEREOTYPES AND PREJUDICES

EVERYTHING YOU EXPERIENCE

Colorism (prejudice and discrimination based on skin tone, privileging lighter tones) is one of the most striking consequences of colonization. It occurs when Black people are treated differently depending on their skin tone. This directly affects how they are socially accepted, the job opportunities they receive, and even the way they are approached by the police.

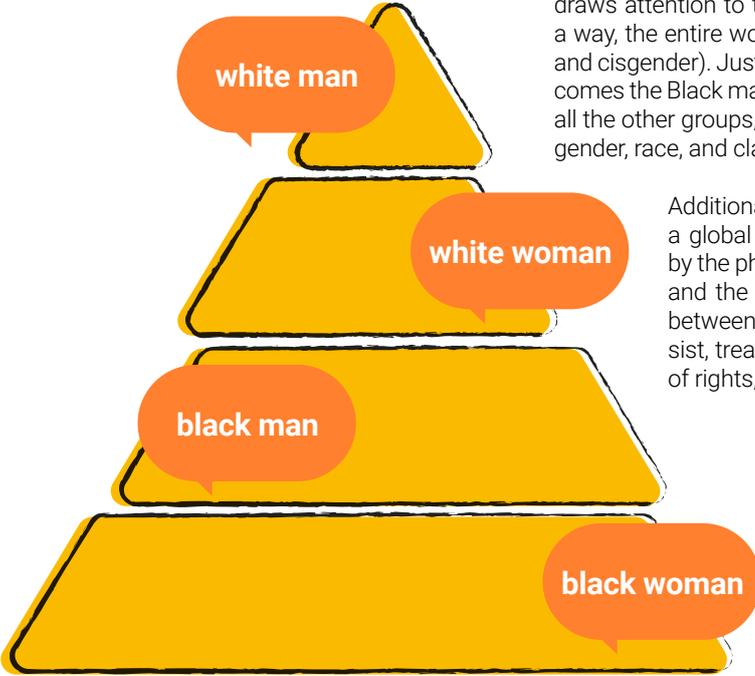
In practice, this hierarchy of tones creates inequalities: people with darker skin usually face greater difficulties, while those with lighter skin—often a result of mixed ancestry—tend to be more accepted.

But it is important to emphasize: in a society structured by a white gaze, it does not matter if a Black person is well dressed, has money, or holds prestigious positions such as judge or doctor. Skin color is always the first aspect noticed, often requiring them to justify and prove who they are. A white person in the same situation would rarely face such constraints.

STEREOTYPES

Ageism | Disabilities | Gender Equality | LGBTQ+ | Migration | **Racism**

MYTH	FACT
<i>"All black men only want to have sex, all the time!"</i>	Black men are often described as violent or hypersexualized, while Black women are viewed as sensual, being wrongly treated as if they were always sexually available.
<i>"All Black women are cleaners"</i>	It's usual hearing black weman associated with domestic work, especially as cleaners. Black men, in turn, are often seen as delinquents, criminals, or construction workers. These prejudices are part of a racist idea that attempts to deny the intellectual capacity of Black people and make their historical and cultural contributions invisible.
<i>"All Africans are..."</i>	It is important to remember that Africa is not a country, as it is often portrayed, but a diverse continent with 54 countries, different languages, cultures, and peoples. Reducing this diversity to a single image is another way of reinforcing misinformation and prejudice.



The African-American thinker Angela Davis, in her book *Women, Race and Class*, draws attention to the social pyramid that structures the Western world—and, in a way, the entire world. At the top of this pyramid is the white man (heterosexual and cisgender). Just below is the white woman (heterosexual and cisgender). Next comes the Black man (heterosexual and cisgender). And at the bottom, supporting all the other groups, is the Black woman, the most affected by the combination of gender, race, and class oppression.

Additionally, it is important to highlight how racism also operates on a global level. African countries are often chosen as testing grounds by the pharmaceutical industry of Western countries, especially Europe and the United States. This practice reinforces unequal relationships between nations and shows how colonialism left marks that still persist, treating Africa not as a diverse and sovereign continent, a subject of rights, but as a space for use, experimentation, and exploitation.

SKIN COLOR AND NEIGHBORHOOD

When discussing inequality, we must understand that race and social class are not separate issues but deeply interconnected. This is what we call intersectionality. Black people in socially vulnerable positions face greater challenges because racial discrimination is compounded by a lack of access to resources, quality education, healthcare, and job opportunities. On the other hand, Black people who belong to the middle class also suffer discrimination, but they experience it differently. Although they may have access to more resources and spaces, they are still affected by racism in their daily lives—whether at work, in the streets, or in social interactions.

In other words, skin color and social class intersect and create different realities for people, but racism remains present in all spheres of life, regardless of class.

Anti-racism

Racism is an international problem that generates inequalities and limits opportunities. Anti-racist actions are essential for building a just society, and

Ageism | Disabilities | Gender Equality | **LGBTIQ+** | Migration | **Racism**

this involves recognizing prejudices, educating oneself about different cultures, supporting inclusion policies, and respecting the experiences of marginalized people.

Fighting racism also means fighting violence: we cannot support or tolerate physical or psychological aggression against someone because of their skin color or the country they come from. Every action counts: reporting discriminatory activities, practicing tolerance in the face of difference, and promoting inclusive actions are ways of taking a stand against everyday racism.

In short, being anti-racist is everyone's responsibility, necessary to guarantee respect and equal educational and professional opportunities. Anyone who cares about peace in the world must be anti-racist and, by doing so, contributes to building a society free from prejudice and racial violence.



Being **ANTI-RACIST** means actively promoting inclusion, justice, and valuing human diversity.

USE REAL EXPERIENCES

STORIES OF DISCRIMINATION

During a history lesson, the teacher said: "You can see the effects of globalization right here in our classroom." Everyone turned to look at me. At that moment, I wanted to disappear."
 (Lithuania, girl with African heritage, 15)

"I once went to court over racial discrimination. A man who had returned from the UK called me a 'negro' and made a comment about monkeys as I walked by with my child. I won the case in court."
 (Lithuania, woman with African heritage, 40).
 --This story is from Lithuanian media--

"Once I was in a club at a party with my friends. I went to buy us drinks. I was in a row with a bunch of other people. When I was already at the bar, the bartenders started to ignore me, and people that were behind me were getting their orders already. When my friend came to check on me, she came to the bar and the bartender asked her what she wanted. I was really disappointed and upset and I was also scared that other people in the club might look at me in that way also."
 (Slovak woman, 20)

"I attended a public school in the city center, where most students were white (60%), while 40% were from non-white ethnicities, most of them Black. On the first days of class, a classmate had a white crayon in his hand. He then made a joke, expecting others to laugh: "Do you want to see how a Black person gets happy?" He then rubbed the white crayon on my skin, drawing a white line on my arm. There was a mixture of cheerful laughter and some not so much. For me, only silence remained."
 (Brazil, Junior, 13 years old)

"As a gay man I experience racism a lot of times. Mostly on the dating apps where people have in their BIO, that they don't want to interact with Roma people, or when they ask me if I am Roma and after I answer yes, they told me they are not interested or ghost me. I had this experience many times."
 (Slovak men, 21)

"My friend and I once went to a store to buy clothes for a birthday party of another school friend, happy that our parents had given us money. As soon as we entered the store, the security guard followed us immediately, watching us with obvious suspicion. We looked around the store but found nothing interesting. As we left, the security guard, still following us, approached us and demanded that we open our backpacks. He accused us of not being 'trustworthy,' arguing that besides being Black, we lived in a nearby poor neighborhood. When we left, we had the same feeling to share: we are already used to it."
 (Portugal, Maria and Joana, daughters of immigrants from Guinea-Bissau, 12 and 13 years old)



SESSION PLANNING

Activity

Social Experiment: Everyday Racism – What if it happened to you?

Goal: Create a social-media-oriented social experiment about an episode of everyday racism.

Duration: 90 minutes

Prepare beforehand: Chairs, tables, whiteboard + pens (blue and red), 1 sheet of paper and 1 pen per person, “film script” cards (1 per group)

Instructions:

1. **5'** Welcome and brief explanation of the activity proposal.
2. **10'** Viewing of three videos as reference and inspiration:

video	description	link	duration
Doll	Doll test – Effects of racism on children in Italy	YouTube	2'44
Lithuania	Experiment via social media messaging	YouTube	5'29
Blind men in the street	Social experiment with blind person on the street	YouTube	1'02

3. **10'** Group reflection about the videos and real-life situations, asking questions such as: How did you feel? Have you ever experienced something similar? Would anyone like to share a situation? How do you think you would react in any of these situations?
4. **5'** Explanation that they will create a similar experience; group division with 4–5 people; delivery of “script” sheet.
5. **25'** Each group must write a script using the table below and rehearse a role-play lasting no more than 5 minutes:

Write your script:	
Situation chosen by the group	
Location for filming	
Title	
Synopsis	
Script: behaviors, actions, and character lines	
Roles of each group member	

6. **20'** Presentation of the situations to the whole group
7. **15'** Final reflection, asking questions such as: Do social networks impact the discussion of these issues and contribute to changing mindsets? How can we confront and combat racism in communities and institutions? What is youth’s role in creating a more equitable world?
8. Final challenge: Encourage the creation of the video beyond the session and posting it on social networks so people can reflect on racism and anti-racism.



TIPS/NOTES:

- This is not a competition between groups.
- Solve everything within the group, in a simple way.
- The main focus is that the creative process itself encourages reflection on the topic and promotes autonomous film production.

SESSION PLANNING

Training team: Matilde and Luna		Where & When: School in Lithuania, November 2025		Topic: RACISM	
Goal:	Recognize and rename the types of racism in 21st-century society Promote reflection through the development of a social experiment about everyday racism for social media.			Session n°:	1
Target group:	Classroom, up to 30 young people			Total Duration:	90 min
Steps:	Contents to develop	Activities	Resources needed	Duration	
INTRODUCTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome • Objectives and main activity presentation • Introduction to the theme, highlighting the respect and sensitivity it requires • Watch 3 different social experiment videos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theoretical presentation • Viewing of the 3 videos • Open questions for sharing and reflection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Printed session guide • Computer with video links • Projector • Speakers 	30'	
DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of the themes and events shown in the videos • Presentation of the activity • Creation of the scripts • Group's presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group work • Role-play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Printed material for each group • Pens 	1h10m	
CONCLUSION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final reflection and encouragement to continue the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guided presentation and discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • white board 	20'	

07

Important stuff to remember

- ✓ **Adapt well** methods and activities to the group
- ✓ **Reduce theoretical information** and invest in more activities
- ✓ **Think of 'Plans B's'** for everything
- ✓ **Study the theory** and master all material the best you can do
- ✓ **Practice, practice and practice** again in advance
- ✓ **Be aware** of the non-verbal communication
- ✓ **Verify what the group knows** on the topic to align the content
- ✓ **Have a creative spirit** while planning, preparing tools, and promoting activities.
- ✓ **Guide** the session, don't control
- ✓ **Moderate discussions** allowing a safe and positive interaction
- ✓ **Practice** a flexible and balanced time management
- ✓ **Difficult questions** will arise: "I don't know the answer but will look into it, thank you!"
- ✓ **Strong and conflicting views** will arise: prepare, be assertive and calm!
- ✓ **Don't react impulsively** to misinformed, or even potentially offensive questions - be firm but respectful
- ✓ **Seek representation** from people within the vulnerable group of your topic - ensure that voices are heard!
- ✓ **Invite activists** from your local community to participate

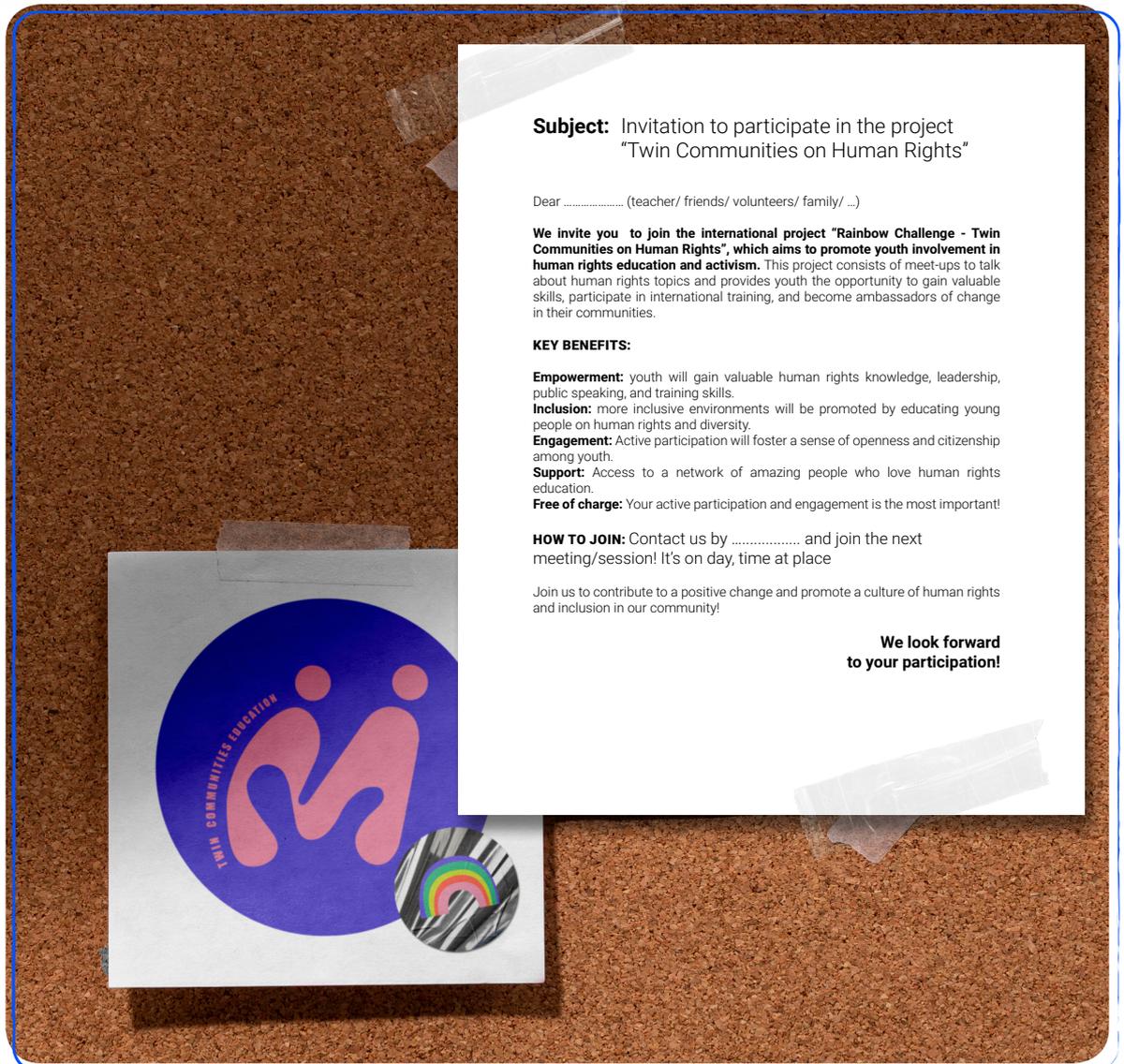


Next steps: How to start your activist group

It's time to sow some seeds!

When preparing a call for a session or creating a group, it's important to first reflect on the location, remembering it should be in a space where any person can feel comfortable and safe. Every session can be an opportunity to create a support network and educate oneself on human rights-related topics.

Adapt this draft of a call as you think fit:



You can send it to whoever makes more sense to you.
Our ideas:

- **your school groups**
- **your community groups**
- **NGOs groups for human rights issues in your community**
- **Gather your friends and propose starting an active group!**



We advise you to send the text with an image of the program - it attracts attention!
Then you can answer any questions people may have for you to explain the project or facilitate a session right away!



Glossary of key terms

Activism: refers to the actions taken to promote or bring about social, political, or environmental change. Activists use various forms of protest, advocacy, and community organizing to challenge injustice and fight for the rights of marginalized or oppressed groups.

Advocacy: The act of supporting a cause or proposal to influence policies and decisions at various levels (local, national, international).

Bisexual: a person who is attracted to others regardless of their gender.

Discrimination: an unfair or harmful treatment of individuals or groups based on characteristics such as nationality, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age, skin colour or other identities. It involves denying rights, opportunities, or dignity due to social biases. It contradicts the principles of equality and human rights.

Empathy: is the ability to share someone else's feelings or experiences by imagining what it would be like to be in that person's situation.

Gay: a man or a non-binary person attracted to other men, although the term can be used in some contexts to describe both gay men and lesbians.

Human Rights: are the fundamental rights and freedoms that every person is entitled to, regardless of their nationality, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or any other status. These rights include the right to life, liberty, and security; freedom of expression; and protection from discrimination.

Intersectionality: is a framework for understanding how different forms of discrimination or disadvantage (such as racism, sexism, classism, etc.) intersect and overlap. People who face multiple forms of discrimination (e.g., a Black woman or a disabled migrant) experience these issues in unique ways that cannot be fully understood in isolation.

Intersex: a person who is born with physical sex characteristics (like chromosomes, hormones, or genitals) that don't fit typical definitions of male or female.

Lesbian: a woman or a non-binary person attracted to other women

Prejudice: is an unfair and unreasonable opinion or feeling, especially when formed without enough thought or knowledge. Can be an irrational attitude of hostility directed against an individual, a group, a skin colour, or their supposed characteristics without just grounds. Can also result in injury or damage by a consequence of disregard of one's rights due to preconceived judgment or opinion.

Privilege: is the way in which people who are rich, come from a high social class, have authority or belong to a particular race or gender have more advantages in society than people who do not belong to these groups. So everyone who doesn't have to think about their human rights being respected as they are already taken for granted is a privileged person. [<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/privilege>]

Protest: A public demonstration or act of resistance to express opposition to a policy, law, or social issue.

Social Exclusion: The process of keeping people or groups out of society or from accessing certain opportunities, often based on race, gender, disability, or other factors.

Social Inclusion: refers to the process of improving the terms on which individuals and groups take part in society. This involves reducing inequality, ensuring equal access to opportunities, and promoting the active participation of all individuals in social, economic, and political life.

Social Inequality: happens when society resources are not distributed evenly, often as a result of unequal actions based on categories of people. Accessing those resources depends on factors such as power, religion, kinship, prestige, race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, intelligence and class. It's not only linked to an economic inequality (unequal distribution of income and wealth), but also to the distribution of rights and privileges, social power, access to public services (such as education or the judicial system), housing, transportation and financial services (like credit).

Stereotypes: are set, often simplified or generalized, ideas that people have about what someone or something is like - especially an idea that is wrong. These ideas may be based on a particular group or category of people's characteristics such as ethnicity, gender, age, or religion.

Transgender: a person whose gender identity/expression differs from the sex and gender they were assigned at birth (in opposition to cisgender, that is someone whose gender identity aligns with the sex assigned at birth). This includes, among many others, transgender people who are between male and female, but also transsexuals and transvestites

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR): A document adopted by the United Nations in 1948 that outlines the basic rights and freedoms to which all people are entitled.



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- The International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer and Intersex (LGBTQI) Youth & Student Organisation: [IGLYO](#) (accessed in 12/2025)
- [ILGA World](#) (accessed in 12/2025)
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- [OHCHR and the Human Rights of LGTI People](#) (accessed in 12/2025)

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SESSION PLANNING

Training team:		Where & When:		Topic:		
Goal:					Session n°:	
Target group:					Total Duration:	
Steps:	Contents to develop	Activities	Resources needed	Duration		
INTRODUCTION						
DEVELOPMENT						
CONCLUSION						



If you don't feel safe due to your religion, sexuality, gender identity or political opinion, speak to someone you trust and/or contact a helpline.

You are not alone.



Project managed by

TOLERANT YOUTH ASSOCIATION (Lithuania)

Tolerant Youth Association (TJA) is a grassroots youth organization in Lithuania, which aims to promote human rights, inclusion and youth empowerment through participation. TJA operates on a national level, implementing activities and projects addressing various human rights issues and connecting youth across the country. The organization focuses on promoting human rights approach and inclusive education, empowerment and human rights awareness among youth, particularly focusing on LGBTQ+ people and other vulnerable groups. It also advocates the rights of migrants, non EU/non EEA countries citizens (the so called "third country nationals" - TCNs), refugees and asylum seekers.

Project Partners

ILGA PORTUGAL (Portugal)

Founded in 1995, ILGA Portugal is the oldest NGO in Portugal striving for equality and against discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and sexual characteristics. Its mission is the social integration of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex population and their families in Portugal. Its action domains are: community-centered activities and support, with a LGBTI+ Centre; advocacy against discrimination, political activity and training to promote full citizenship, Human Rights, and gender equality; and support services for LGBTI+ population and their families like Psychological Support; LGBTI+ Hotline, Legal Support, Social Support and Victim Support.

SAPLIŃQ O.Z. (Slovakia)

SapliŃq was established in April 2012 with the aim to develop young LGBT+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer) leaders and LGBT+ youth communities. We organize workshops and discussions for young people on topics related to LGBT+ identity, both trying to educate the broader public and creating community spaces for LGBT+ youth. We are the only NGO focused on LGBT+ youth in Slovakia and one of the very few organising international training for LGBT+ youth and LGBT+ youth workers. SapliŃq is based in the east of Slovakia, as the only organisation working with and for LGBT+ young people in this part of the country. SapliŃq has three main areas of activities:

1. International trainings for LGBT youth and LGBT youth workers, funded by the Erasmus+:Youth in Action programme and organising trainings in general
2. Košice PRIDE as a public, visible event focused on community-building in east Slovakia
3. PRIZMA – counselling and community centre in Košice, currently we are running regular community meetings (Queer Spot) and already have some friendly therapists we can refer people to.

RAINBOW CHALLENGE

Twin Communities on Human Rights

PROJECT FINANCED BY:

