



# TOGETHER ABILITY

Booklet 2

Strategic youth work for inclusion

# Imprint

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*"Inclusion is a democratic value,  
to give voice to everybody.  
A democratic process is an  
accessible process. In the  
booklet we talk about how we  
make it accessible."*

(Simone Dell'Armi, META Società  
Cooperativa Sociale Onlus, Italy)



# INTRODUCTION

## Who are we?

We are the Competence Group Methods, a group of professionals working in the field of international youth work and affiliated with Generation Europe – The Academy. Operating across diverse social contexts in various European countries, our specific aim within the programme is to empower young people from diverse backgrounds to raise their voices and take meaningful action in their local communities and beyond.

## Institutional Sources and Literature



The “Convention on the Rights of the Child” (CRC) and the “Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities” (CRPD) already state that signing governments are responsible for ensuring that all children, irrespective of ability or disability, enjoy their rights without any form of discrimination. This implies a commitment to inclusion rooted in the recognition that every child is

a unique individual deserving respect, consultation, skill development and fulfilment of needs. Their contributions are to be valued and encouraged.

In 2015, world leaders endorsed the Education 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, a structured framework for making education universally accessible and laying the foundation for sustainable development and peace. The agenda includes 17 bold, global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with Goal 4 focusing on education, encapsulating the aims of Education 2030.

UNESCO coordinates international efforts to achieve the education goals outlined in Sustainable Development Goal 4 through partnerships, policy guidance, capacity development, monitoring, and advocacy, utilising the Education 2030 Framework for Action as a roadmap.

Member states formally adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, committing to providing inclusive and equitable quality education at all levels, from early childhood, to tertiary, and vocational training. This commitment underscores the principle that all people should have access to lifelong learning opportunities.

The significance of inclusion and diversity has been recently enforced by the EYWA, the European Youth Work Agenda, highlighting the importance of the European youth programmes, such as Erasmus+ as a central tool for implementation at the European level.

## Our Contribution



Considering the recent and renewed institutional inputs and drawing on the experience of the network in implementing youth mobility actions at both local and international levels, we have written this booklet to contribute to the discourse. Our goal is to create long-term and strategic youth work measures to promote inclusion at the local level. We emphasise the development and implementation of individual-oriented needs assessment that view diversity as a resource. Recognising and understanding individual skills and needs may help to define achievable objectives on both individual and group levels, enabling the identification of suitable tools and resources to address different needs. Ultimately, this approach aims to increase the diversity of people who have stable access to youth work.

## Key Concepts



Inclusion and diversity are intricately connected, presenting a high degree of complexity. Inclusion and exclusion can be experienced at various levels such as physical and mental, or in terms of comfort, active participation and so on. Diversity manifests across multiple dimensions, such as political, linguistic, religious, economical and many other backgrounds within a group.

Such complexity poses a big challenge for youth work, emphasising the need for diverse practices in planning to efficiently acknowledge and involve people, resources, stakeholders, and diversity challenges.

The key term here is “accessibility”, which correlates with both inclusion and diversity challenges. In order to work on inclusion across different levels, an appropriate level of accessibility has to be achieved. Accessibility parameters also vary based on group composition, diversity or, in other words, the uniqueness of individuals within a group.

The term “uniqueness” has emerged many times in the network’s experience, highlighting the importance of assessing individual skills and needs rather than fostering comparisons and confrontations between the individuals.

When we talk about accessibility we mean proactive practices aimed at designing and implementing activities, events, programmes and services that cater to the needs of participants from diverse backgrounds. This proactive approach seeks to actively create conditions for participation, mitigating barriers that might discourage people from getting involved.

## Limitations

Working on inclusion presents significant challenges. In the network’s experience achieving “complete inclusion” or a “totally inclusive mobility/event” is practically unattainable, given the constraints of available resources and the multitude of issues to address.

This booklet itself cannot claim to be completely inclusive, as it cannot cover all possible aspects and dimensions of diversity and inclusion. Reading alone can vary in accessibility, and professionals specialising in adapting

texts for specific target groups can provide valuable support for editors, both in the early structuring or final editing phase.

Direct contact with target communities not only offers deeper insights into their specific needs but also generates a range of proposals, ideas, and practices from the community itself.

Taking this into account, it is very important to provide accurate information about accessibility when planning any action or event, as well as to accurately define the target group. Assessing means, resources and skills during the project writing phase and before implementing any action is a key step to identify the target group effectively.

# 1. INTERSECTIONALITY

Intersectionality, a term from social science, addresses the complexity of social inequalities, privileges and oppression. It helps to understand, to analyse and work towards inclusion and against exclusion. Rather than providing a strict definition, it is better understood by exploring its key components.

## Intersectionality is about:

- ▶ Recognising that people's lives are shaped by their identities, relationships, and social factors.
- ▶ Understanding that social categories such as gender, ethnicity, age, disability, economic status, education, sexual orientation, physical appearance, religious orientation etc., intersect within a person, interacting simultaneously.
- ▶ Examining inequalities not only within single categories but with a multi-dimensional perspective.
- ▶ Approaching minorities as a group of diverse people threatened or excluded by multiple systems.

**Example:** "Disabled women can be affected by intersectional discrimination. This becomes clear with the issue of forced sterilisation. Women are made infertile against their will because of a disability. This form of discrimination cannot be explained solely by the violation of women's rights or the violation of disabled people's rights. The term intersectionality makes it possible to comprehensively describe and understand this experience of exclusion.

However, intersectionality does not play a role in all kinds of discrimination. A wheelchair user cannot go to the toilet in a restaurant because access to the toilet is only possible via stairs. In this case, the woman experiences discrimination as a disabled person – regardless of her gender" (Translated from BODYD, n.d.).

In the realm of youth work, intersectionality can be helpful, when using it as a sensitive and open-minded approach. Instead of making assumptions based on factors like a person's refugee background, it's important to acknowledge the nature of each individual's identity and experiences.



A fundamental principle in youth work involves reflecting and avoiding assumptions that, for example, all individuals with a migration background face identical situations and challenges. Intersectionality emphasises that an individual's identity is influenced by various elements, including gender, age, socioeconomic status, and disability, which intersect to create distinctive circumstances and needs.

By embracing intersectionality in youth work, professionals gain a deeper insight into the complexities of young people's lives and can offer more inclusive, individual support. This approach recognizes that a young person's background is just one facet of a broader, multifaceted context, and their experiences may significantly differ from those with similar backgrounds. Such an approach fosters a more inclusive environment where each young person is seen individually.

## INTERSECTIONALITY WHEEL

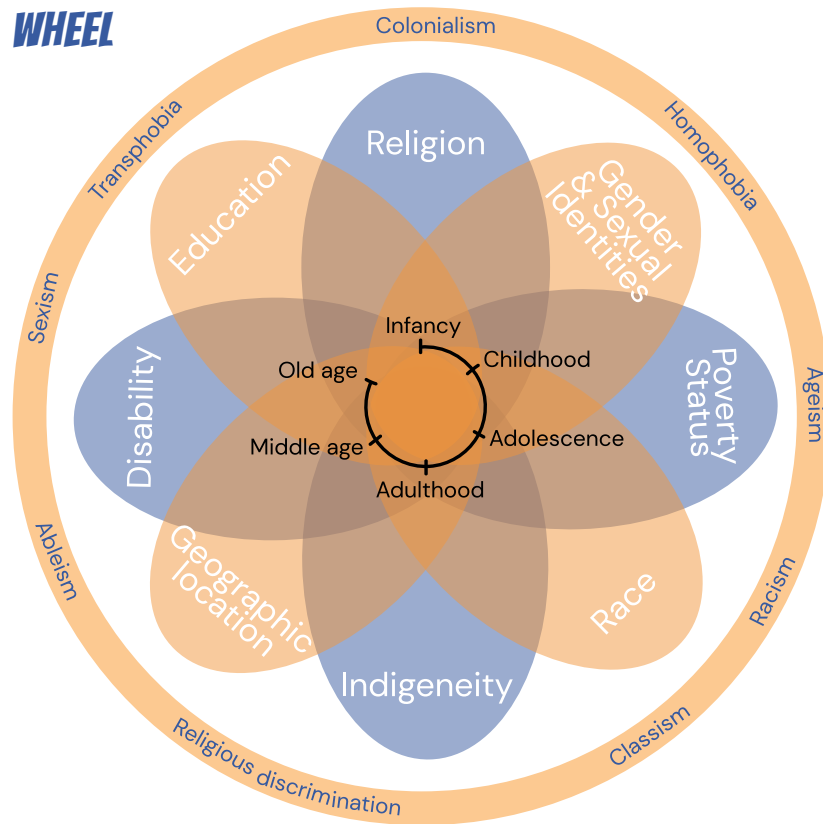


Figure 1: Intersectionality wheel

## 2. COMPETENCES

A competence is a set of standards that a competent person is expected to meet, comprising underpinning knowledge, skills, values and attitudes. In the context of inclusion, having theoretical knowledge and practical skills is not enough. True inclusion requires a conscious decision and willingness to apply this knowledge and these skills in daily life.

Analysing competences at different levels of influence—personal (“within myself”), group (“within my team”), and wider community (“within my organisation and community”) provides insight into creating an inclusive environment. Personal competences involve interacting purposefully with colleagues, while group competences focus on collaboration and teamwork. The broader community level encompasses systemic initiatives and practices. In this booklet we will focus on the personal competences needed to create an inclusive environment when working with youth, both locally and internationally. Three key areas are highlighted:

### a) Increasing Awareness of Diversity and Inclusion through Reflection

- ▶ Self-awareness of values, beliefs, cultural convention, language use, barriers, and enablers;
- ▶ Ability to reflect on your actions to continuously learn;
- ▶ Knowledge of effective feedback styles, and processes;
- ▶ Emotional intelligence and understanding behaviour change;
- ▶ Knowledge of techniques to challenge assumptions, minimise stereotyping, become aware of one’s biases, and engage in evidence-based decision-making.

### b) Advocating for Diverse Perspectives

Inclusion doesn’t mean just having youth or colleagues with different backgrounds in the group. It’s not enough to ensure the visible diversity of the group. Inclusion

requires creating the space for different perspectives and ways of dealing with the tasks in the group:

- ▶ Curiosity and openness to diverse perspectives and its implementation;
- ▶ Seeking understanding and respecting differences;
- ▶ Awareness of personal perspective and communication context;
- ▶ Use of inclusive language to avoid exclusion;
- ▶ Knowledge of active listening techniques and skills to apply them when working with youth.

### **c) Adjust and Adapt Communication Styles to be Effective in a Diverse Workplace**

Effectively engaging with a diverse group of young individuals requires adjusting and adapting communication styles. This entails tailoring language, tone, and methods to accommodate the unique backgrounds, cultures, and preferences of the youth involved. The aim is not only to ensure understanding but also to create a positive resonance, fostering an environment where everyone feels heard and valued. Key competences include:

- ▶ Knowledge of how different perspectives, situations and contexts affect meaning and messaging;
- ▶ Skills to plan for and deal with ambiguous and confusing situations;
- ▶ Identifying barriers to effective communication, such as the impact of culture, age, gender, and stereotypes;
- ▶ Skills to identify unwritten rules, ways of doing things, norms and adapt to different communication styles.

These competences should be developed through a continual feedback loop. Acquiring knowledge and applying it in varying contexts enhances skills. The learning cycle involves gaining awareness and knowledge, applying them with confidence, receiving feedback to assess competency, and using lessons learned for future applications.

Developing personal competences in the area of diversity and inclusion may be the step youth workers need to take to practise inclusive leadership, which means having the courage to take conscious steps to break down barriers for people at risk of being excluded from society. Inclusive leaders embody a leadership approach that appreciates diversity, invites and welcomes everyone's

individual contribution, and encourages full engagement in decision-making processes and shaping reality. The aim of inclusive leadership is to create, change and innovation whilst balancing everybody's needs.

## Preconditions for Inclusive Leadership

Inclusive leadership requires certain preconditions to enable openness and inclusion:

- 1. Acknowledgement and value of everybody's inherent worth** – Shift focus from seeing people's deficits to recognising their resources and qualities, and fostering a sense of belonging among youth.
- 2. Human Rights Approach** – Follow the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in youth work, which states that everyone is equally entitled to human rights without discrimination. All rights described in the declaration are universal, interrelated, interdependent and indivisible to each human being.
- 3. Awareness of Interconnection** – See the broader picture of youth work, local actions and the whole project. To address the challenges of this era and create a world that is stronger, purposeful, diverse and mindful, inclusive leaders must change their perspective. Instead of just caring about themselves and those nearby, they should care about everyone, including themselves. This shift from a self-centred outlook to a broader awareness benefits the overall well-being.
- 4. Role of Power in Inclusive Leadership** – Empower young people to lead through small collective actions. Inclusive leadership helps everyone use their strengths, creativity, ideas, and motivation, allowing both individual and group potential to flourish.
- 5. Courage to Share and Take Responsibility** – Encourage everyone to take responsibility for inclusion, culture and success of their project or society as a whole, not just for their own role or area of work.

# 3. PRACTICES

## Bad Practices



Youth workers in the network emphasise that employing standard goals, a fixed methodology and a static set of competences, especially in international youth mobilities and local youth centres, may have drawbacks. This approach may lead to defining individuals by what is lacking rather than recognising their potential contributions. Expectations set without considering individual needs may create a sense of inadequacy and hinder personal contributions. Participants or users may feel disconnected, powerless, and less motivated to engage with commitment, impacting their sense of belonging and potential.

## Good practices



In order to effectively meet different needs and to allow a variety of skills/competences to be developed, it is crucial to be able to acknowledge and evaluate characteristics, means and resources of both the users and the working team.

Utilising assessment methods along with checklists, can be useful when it comes to evaluating the capacity of infrastructures, resources and competences available. Self-assessment methods provide a framework for individuals, may they be users or professionals, to safely express their needs, backgrounds, skills and expectations. Gaining a comprehensive yet detailed understanding of all these elements can facilitate the planning process, as well as allowing more room for reflection on potential adaptations in means and methodology.

By repeating those steps systematically, it becomes possible to monitor the whole process in its development, allowing for more adaptation and adjustments. Developing and adapting practices aimed to raise awareness within a group and community is important in order to plan the creation of safe environments for both users and the working team. Strategies promoting common agreement are beneficial for individuals sharing spaces together. Assessing when external support is needed to make participation accessible to more people is essential. By involving the communities to which a target group belongs in the planning process, the specific needs, competences and aims of the group can be defined. The group itself may generate valuable proposals and best practices, significantly contributing to an inclusive process. It can offer valuable feedback on the methods, practices, and approaches you intend to incorporate into the actions.

Inclusion is a long-term process, requiring self-reflection and self-criticism. If you want to know more about accessibility and access suggestions, then refer to the link provided at the end of the booklet to Access Suggestions by Sins Invalid, a disability justice-based performance project.

## Assessment and Self-Assessment of Needs

In group settings, individuals with different needs come together, some apparent and others hidden. Recognizing and addressing these needs is crucial for fostering an inclusive environment. Examples include the need to be heard, language assistance, breaks, medication, or wheelchair access. Some needs may only become apparent when someone gets upset, while others remain undisclosed unless asked. Conducting needs assessments in group settings can help to create a safe(r) space for individuals to share their needs. By actively seeking input and accommodating diverse needs, it is more possible to promote inclusivity, safety, and collaboration.

Access check-ins, rooted in the Disability Justice and other social justice movements, help identify needs and barriers. The Disability Justice Movement strives to challenge society's perception of disability by acknowledging that disability is not an individual concern but rather a consequence of societal barriers.

At the beginning of an activity/meeting participants are invited to share details about themselves (like name, pronouns) and their access needs, however only if they feel comfortable doing so. Access needs are whatever an individual needs to be able to participate in the best way. “I might need to stand up sometimes to concentrate better” or “Because my blood sugar is low, I need to eat” are just two examples. If access needs are met, participants are invited to say: “My access needs are currently met”.

This practice is an ongoing learning process for everyone involved. Everyone has access needs, but most people are not always aware of them or are not used to talking about them and some will require time to identify what they need.

Talking about barriers can help the group evolve. Learning to recognise own needs and the needs of others can be helpful to create awareness among the group. Access check-ins are a crucial practice in ensuring the improvement of accessibility and inclusivity of events, spaces, and activities for different individuals.

## Safe Space

Creating a safe environment is the basis of productive teamwork. It provides stability for both facilitators and participants, enabling open communication, self-discovery, and collaborative learning. From a pedagogical aspect, joint learning and experiences occur more easily, fostering an inclusive and honest community.

The role of youth leaders is to facilitate the collaborative creation of a safe space together with the participants and ensure everyone follows established rules. Within this environment, participants have the opportunity to express their individual needs, shaping the physical and mental space collaboratively with facilitators based on shared aspects. Organisers and facilitators bear the responsibility of ensuring the basic conditions, such as venue accessibility, natural light, suitable seating, and visualisation for better understanding. Additionally, they set fundamental values and frameworks, observing time frames, and speaking from the “I” perspective instead of judging.

While it's challenging to make a safe space entirely secure for everyone, the goal is to foster an honest and open atmosphere that supports open communication. This entails creating an environment where personal ideas, opinions, needs, and conflicts can be acknowledged and understood. Achieving safe and honest group work involves promoting accepting, non-judgmental thinking and communication. Participants are encouraged to listen to each other without passing judgement and express themselves without fear of judgement.

### **Establishing Clear Frameworks for Group Work**

To establish a safe and effective group work environment, clear frameworks that can be understood and followed by everyone are essential. Certain rules are inherent to the project, and accepted by participants and facilitators upon joining, such as adhering to time frames, and as agreed by organisers and facilitators, avoiding discriminatory speech and actions. Venue-specific rules are non-negotiable. All other frameworks are created jointly by the group. Asking questions like "What would make you feel safe in the group?" and "What do you need in order to collaborate well with the group?" can help to start a dialogue on creating a safe space and functioning group work.

In the initial stages of group work, it is important to assess participants' expectations, fears and individual needs related to the process. Mapping and sharing expectations helps facilitators understand participants' ideas, programme expectations, and visions regarding themselves and the outcome of the joint work. Sharing individual expectations related to group work will lead us to form common group goals. We ask about fears, because, as facilitators, we need to be aware of the anxieties that are present in the group, and keep them in mind when planning activities. Encouraging the open expression of fears without judgement fosters trust among group members, reducing shame. It may turn out that they are not alone with fear, which strengthens the feeling of being understood. Mapping individual needs, such as preferences for regular breaks, or the written/visual display of instructions, helps us to create an accessible and inclusive physical and mental space for all group members.

Regular or even daily reflection groups or a feedback box (where participants can leave their notes anonymously) help us to be constantly aware of the needs arising in the group and, if necessary, to modify the framework together in accordance with emerging or changing needs.



## 4. REFLECTION

In lieu of a traditional conclusion, the writers' team offers a brief reflection. This booklet has a certain level of complexity – although our aim was to create a helpful and easy to navigate tool, we recognise that its flow doesn't follow a straight and clear line, and that maybe it raises more questions than giving concrete answers. But the same happens with inclusion itself: the topic is – and has to remain – diverse, wide, open and complex.

We intentionally leave this booklet open to the reader's own conclusions and thoughts. Understanding inclusion and working towards inclusive youth work is an ongoing, reflective process; and thus cannot be neatly encapsulated in brief texts and specific methods. Instead, this booklet serves as a starting point for dialogue, raising awareness and inspiring new perspectives on inclusive practices. We hope that the booklet assists youth workers in embarking on or enhancing their journey toward a more inclusive future.

## 5. METHODS

In this chapter we introduce various methods to promote awareness of intersectionality in groups, such as the "Power Flower" method, alongside inclusive practices during activities, like "Calling for Inclusion". In order to carry out assessment and self-assessment processes, methods like the "Party Inventory Check" can be implemented and further adapted according to the facilitators needs and the participants characteristics.

To establish a safe space for the group, it's crucial to gather input from participants enabling them to express their needs. "Pronoun Circle" and "Common Agreement" serve as tools for facilitators and the group, laying the groundwork for a safer environment to be established and sustained throughout the activities.

# POWER FLOWER

**Type of method** Self-reflection on the complexity of identity and privileges

**Source / Author** Adapted from UNPRPD & UN Women Intersectionality Resource Guide and Toolkit (2021) and Compass Manual (2002)

**Number of participants** Up to 20

**Related competences** Self-reflection, social awareness

**Objectives**

- Practical activity to understand the basics of intersectionality
- Understanding how intersecting identities influence our lives and explore how these intersections are linked to privilege and oppression

**Time / Duration** 60 – 90 min

**Materials**

- Sheets of paper with flower outline, one per participant
- Flipchart sheets
- Colourful paper or moderation cards
- Scissors
- Markers and pens
- Tape/Blue tack

**Facilitator requirements** Experience or at least comprehension of intersectional discrimination is crucial. Discussion coordination skills needed.

**Room requirements** Accessible room. Enough space for the participants to work. Possibly tables and chairs, not necessary if the group feels comfortable being on the floor. An empty wall or floor space for the presentation.

## Description of the activity

### Preparation (for the facilitator):

- Cut 12 large petal shapes and a central circle from flipchart paper and place them on the wall or floor, arranging them like a flower
- Prepare a paper with a pre-drawn 12-petal flower for each participant
- Prepare some cards with different social classifications (for example: gender, race, ethnicity, language, religion/faith, age group, socioeconomic status, education level, disability, location (e.g. urban, rural, remote), sexual orientation and more) and keep some empty for further suggestions by the group.

→

## Implementation:

**Step 1:** Start in a circle and briefly introduce the topic of the activity. Make participants aware they are in a safe space to reflect without judgement on their identities.

**Step 2:** Decide with the group the specific context of the activity (will it be their country, city, local group?) and write it in the centre of the flower. Then decide which social characteristics you will put on each of the 12 petals, and stick the related cards on the petals. Let the participants suggest characteristics that they feel are important and only help them by suggesting more if they are stuck.

**Step 3:** Give each participant a paper with the flower pattern and ask them to note down two things on each petal: the category and their personal characteristics/identities related to each category.

**Step 4:** When each participant has completed their flower, initiate a discussion with questions such as:

- Have your identity or specific aspects of it changed over the years? If so, which factors led to those changes?
- Which identities do you feel you can choose and which do you feel have been chosen for you?
- How has the intersection of your identities affected you?
- Which aspects of your identity have possibly affected your relationship with other people?

**Step 5:** After sharing those thoughts within the group, turn to the big flower and ask the participants who they think has the most power for each category within the context, e.g. which gender or which age group in their opinion is more powerful in their country. When the group reaches an agreement, write it down on the corresponding petal.

**Step 6:** Ask the participants to count how many of their personal characteristics match the dominant ones written on the big flower. They can write the numbers 1-12 on their paper. Ask them if they want to share this number with the others, and only if they feel comfortable, to then place themselves in a line according to this number.

## Debriefing

Facilitate a discussion around questions such as:

- How does it feel to be in your position? Did you expect it? Why/why not?
- Do you think where you are standing now provides a realistic reflection of your power status within your context? Why/why not?
- Are you surprised by where some other people are sitting in relation to you? If so, why?

→

## CALLING FOR INCLUSION

- Were you ever conscious of your power and privilege in relation to others before?
- Do you think this line might change in the future?
- What does this activity tell you about your own power or potential for exercising power? If you now knowingly hold power and privilege over others, how might this influence your everyday life and work? How might you be able to share power?

Try to also make the group aware that we are members of more than one community at the same time and so we can experience oppression and privilege simultaneously, e.g. my mother can be a doctor, a socially respected professional with a high income, but she could have experienced domestic violence, or tough years as a woman trainee doctor.

### Remarks/Technical settings

Power is often least visible to the powerful. Those with more power are often comfortable voicing an opinion. The less power you have the less likely you are to speak out, so try to encourage all participants to speak, allocating equal talk time to everyone.

<b>Type of method</b>	Hands-on activity
<b>Source/Author</b>	Dimitra Zacharouli
<b>Number of participants</b>	4 – 10
<b>Related competences</b>	Critical thinking, inclusive thinking, accessibility awareness
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To practically reflect on accessibility requirements and inclusion of disadvantaged youth</li><li>• To increase inclusion in activities and events step by step</li></ul>
<b>Time/Duration</b>	90 – 120 min
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Board or flipchart</li><li>• Paper or moderation cards</li><li>• Pens, markers</li><li>• Optional: PC or laptop</li></ul>
<b>Facilitator requirements</b>	Coordination skills, basic knowledge about inclusion & accessibility
<b>Room requirements</b>	Ideally a quiet room, with chairs & tables

## Description of activity

**Step 1** (10 min): You can pick with your group an imaginary or a real event that is going to be your next project (youth exchange, workshop or performance, etc). Your task is to create an inclusive open call for participants to be published in various communication channels. If the size of the group allows, you can split the group in different sub-groups and give more specific tasks/forms of the open-call: a leaflet, a FB/Insta post, a press release, a video-teaser, etc.

**Step 2** (10 min): Ask the groups to assign a keeper of the minutes and a rapporteur to the plenary. Then ask them to think of the target group for their event. Who do they wish to invite to participate and to include? Think of age, gender, background, disability etc. and define the target group as detailed as possible.

**Step 3** (20 min): Looking at the defined target group(s), ask the participants to brainstorm and write down all possible barriers of potential participants to access/learn about the call or potential obstacles for people to feel part of the event. What about blind people, people of colour, refugees, illiterate people, non-binary people, wheelchair users?

**Step 4** (30 min): Ask the participants to design the open-call in a way that provides a solution to all possible barriers, or at least to as many of them as possible. (Total inclusion and accessibility may be utopian). Think of texts, images and information in an accessible way and also in a way that disadvantaged or non-mainstream communities may feel represented.

They can write their suggestions on paper, draw or if possible try to create a simple digital draft of the call.

**Step 5** (15 min): Present all plans to the plenary and discuss what is realistic and what challenges could be faced.

## Debriefing

Discussion round:

- What did they learn of the process?
- What do they think that they can get out of and apply to the process?
- How could possible challenges be addressed?
- How could our group become more inclusive in all steps of an event beyond the open-call?

## PARTY INVENTORY CHECK

**Type of method** Brainstorming, snowball, visualisation

**Source / Author** Adaptation of method from Youth Leader Training preparation

**Number of participants** Adaptable to large groups (3–45)  
1st round in group of 3 pax  
2nd round in group of 9 pax

**Related competences** Self awareness, communication

**Objectives** To provide a structure for framing a visual representation of personal competences, needs and aims, and for sharing in a group.

**Time/Duration** 60–90 min  
15 min Introduction and Explanation  
15 minutes Drawing and Framing  
45 min Sharing Rounds:  
– 15 min round 1  
– 30 min round 2  
15 min Presentation (optional)

**Materials**

- Markers, pens, pencils
- Backpack template
- At least 1 paper sheet per pax
- 3 Backpack Posters (flipchart)
- Speaker (optional)

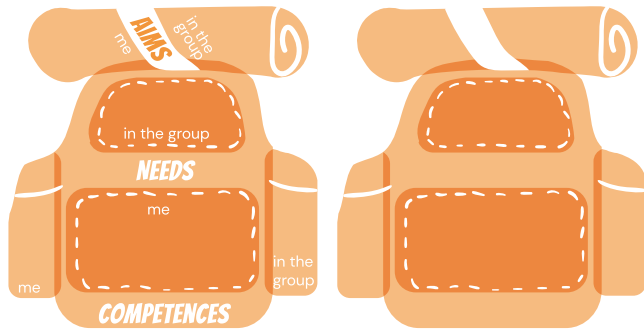
**Facilitator requirements** Self awareness, communication

**Room requirements**

- A large room or space where participants can lie while writing and discussing individually, in groups of 3, groups of 9, and then sitting in a circle.
- 3 flipcharts or similar for the posters are needed.
- Outdoors, weather permitting. A wall or similar to stick or hang the 3 posters is needed, otherwise flipcharts must be set up in advance.

### Description of activity

**Preparation:** Prepare a drawn or printed backpack, made of clearly defined pockets. Label the pockets directly or indirectly referring to personal competences, needs and aims. Facilitators may adapt the number and the labels of the pockets according to the group composition and characteristics. This method can be implemented in one session or in two split sessions: Filling the backpack is something the participants can do in advance, individually, and the sharing phase can be implemented at a later point in time. With this setting, facilitators may even use the time in between to check the individual backpacks and get a sense of the unique characteristics of the group which could provide hints for further adaptations. →



Preparing some sort of storytelling flow in which to frame the backpack, may be a good idea, as well as to link it with other group building methods. In order to do this, it's very important to check and assess the competences and backgrounds of the participants.

**Introduction (15 min):** If the method is implemented entirely in one session, explain first how the backpack template works and how to fill it (facilitators may consider giving some examples, fictional or based on her/himself).

The facilitator also explains how the following rounds will work. It may be good to suggest strategies for sharing the contents of the backpacks. It may be useful to check for questions and doubts before each round.

**Drawing and Framing (15 min):** Each participant has 15 minutes for drawing their backpack (if they want to customise their backpack, otherwise they can use a template provided by the facilitators) and filling all the pockets according to the labels. Background music may be played during this step. It's very important to check if the group has a clear understanding of how to use the backpack template.

**Round 1 (15 min):** Participants get into groups of 3. The facilitator may want to rearrange the groups. Each group has 15 minutes for sharing what they have brought in their backpacks.

**Round 2 (30 min):** A second round is held, in which 3 or more groups come together as one big group. The aim of the second round is the same as the first. Each group has 30 minutes in total. Flipchart size sheets may be used in order to have a bigger backpack in which the groups can cluster the shared contents of the pockets.

**Presentations (15 min):** It's possible to implement a final plenary round in which a representative from each group gives an overview of the outcome of the second round. This is completely optional, and it is important to reflect on the impact it could have on the group, before implementing it.

## PRONOUN CIRCLE

### Debriefing

The reflection on the activity could be part of the daily evaluation session, or eventually framed in a wider flow of activities.

Remind the participants to take pictures of the backpack posters, as they may want to refer to them later on.

### Remarks/Technical settings

With enough time a preliminary round of 15 min, in which each participant can brainstorm and draw his own backpack while music is playing, can be introduced before or instead of the partnership round.

This method can be implemented digitally, through digital boards and digital meetings with breakout rooms.

It is fundamental to highlight that the backpack is something we always carry with us, storing inside things we need to reach goals and make experiences. Storytelling techniques go very well with the backpack activity, as it is possible to recall concepts like adventure and travel.

<b>Type of method</b>	Self-reflection, creating a safe space
<b>Source/Author</b>	Pronoun Round Etiquette – This Body Is Not An Apology <a href="https://thebodyisnotanapology.com/magazine/pronoun-round-etiquette/">https://thebodyisnotanapology.com/magazine/pronoun-round-etiquette/</a>
<b>Number of participants</b>	5–30
<b>Related competences</b>	Accessibility awareness, self awareness
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Raising awareness of diversity</li><li>• Self empowerment</li><li>• Creating a safe and accepting space</li></ul>
<b>Time/Duration</b>	10–30 min
<b>Materials</b>	Chairs in a circle
<b>Facilitator requirements</b>	Facilitation skills, accepting approach, basic knowledge about inclusion and accessibility
<b>Room requirements</b>	Quiet room with light, accessible for all participants, chairs in a circle



### Description of activity

At the very beginning of the group process, we start the work by introducing ourselves and getting to know each other. Before we start, we can explain what it means to have a safe space where everyone respects each other, can feel accepted and heard, and for this reason, respecting people's pronouns is a crucial part, to avoid misgendering. For this we facilitate a simple "name circle" where everyone introduces themselves with their names. When we form the "name circle", we can ask the participants to complete their names with the pronoun they use. This practice takes the pressure off trans people to announce their pronouns to the rest of the group and makes asking for and sharing pronouns a normal part of introductions. If a space is made for everyone to share their pronouns before discussion begins, we can avoid misgendering.



# GROUP AGREEMENT

<b>Type of method</b>	Group building
<b>Source / Author</b>	Krisztina Scholtz, SZUBJEKTIV, Hungary
<b>Number of participants</b>	15–30
<b>Related competences</b>	Self-awareness
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reflecting on individual expectations, fears and needs</li><li>• Emphasising open group communication</li><li>• Setting rules, creating frameworks</li><li>• Creating a safe space</li></ul>
<b>Time / Duration</b>	45–70 min
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sticky notes in 3 different colours</li><li>• Flipchart paper, markers and pens</li><li>• Speaker and calm music (it depends on the needs of the group)</li><li>• Tables at the side of the room, or something that the participants can write on</li></ul>
<b>Facilitator requirements</b>	Coordination skills, making sure that everyone has the chance to express themselves
<b>Room requirements</b>	Big room with chairs in a circle

## Description of activity

First we explain the importance of creating a safe space together by establishing common group rules and frameworks, based on individuals' needs and decided together in a democratic process.

For that we ask participants to think (individually) about their fears, expectations and needs related to the group process. We give them some time (10–15 min) and ask them to write one fear, need, and expectation for each post- it (different colours for needs, expectations and fears).

When they are ready, they place the stickers on a flipchart anonymously (we can divide the flipchart into 3 parts for fears, needs and expectations, or we draw a tree and each part of the tree, e.g. roots, trunk and branches represent a topic).

When everyone has attached their post- its to the flipchart, we read them out loud, and ask if there is something they want to add.

**Version 1:** We facilitate a discussion about the needs, written on the post it, and ask the group to formulate rules, they want to agree on to feel safe and comfortable in the group. We make sure that we all agree on the rules.

**Version 2:** We divide the group into smaller groups and ask them to create frameworks based on the previously shared needs. The goal is to establish rules that help create a common space accessible to everyone and as safe as possible. →

After the small group discussion, groups present the results. We facilitate a discussion about the frameworks, and agree on the ones that have been accepted by the whole group.

These frameworks ensure that the group process is secure and accessible to all. It is the joint task of the group leaders and group members to ensure that everyone adheres to the framework.

Group members sign the jointly prepared contract, thereby indicating their consent.

### Debriefing

Discussion about:

- Are you satisfied with the group agreement created together?
- How did we make decisions together as a group?
- How did you feel during the process?
- How was it for you to express your needs, your opinion?

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## USEFUL LINKS

We have collected links to useful resources. Go to <https://generationeurope.org/booklets> or scan the following QR code:



# ***ABOUT GENERATION EUROPE – THE ACADEMY***

Generation Europe – The Academy is an international network of youth work organisations and a funding programme for European cooperation. We want social participation for all. Young people raise their voices and take action: in their local communities and across all boundaries. Together, we are contributing to an active and inclusive European citizenship.

The young people of our network form local groups and connect at international youth encounters. Together, we create opportunities for participation on local and European level, regardless of origin, parents' income and previous success in the formal education system. In each of our project partnerships, youth from three countries work together. They identify local problems and support each other to address them.

## **Abbreviations**

### **IBB e.V.**

Internationales Bildungs- und Begegnungswerk e.V. / International Association for Education and Exchange. IBB e.V. is the coordinating association of Generation Europe – The Academy.

### **GenE-A**

Generation Europe – The Academy

# GLOSSARY

**Local Group:** A group of young people organised at a local partner organisation in the network of Generation Europe – The Academy.

**Partnership:** International group consisting of three local partner organisations, that signed a partnership agreement, and their local groups.

**Project manager:** A person who is responsible for the general management of the matters concerning Generation Europe – The Academy at the local partner organisation: planning, implementation, accounting and reporting. He\*she has decision making competences in his\*her organisation.

**Youth leader:** A professional working in the field of non-formal education, that takes responsibility for the local group and/or the youth encounter.

**Ambassadors:** Former participants of international youth encounters, that are very active and interested. They are trained to take responsibilities on all levels of Generation Europe – The Academy. They become

mentors in their local groups, a link between the youth leaders and the local youth, and also important advocates for the needs of young people in Europe.

**Participants:** Young people who are taking part in the local group and/or in the youth encounter. (In some cases the local group is really big and only parts of the local group will also join the youth encounter.)

**Activity:** Umbrella term for workshops, excursions, games, informal moments, free time activities and so on.

**Method:** Pedagogical concept of an activity, that also defines its aim. It also has different parts like introduction, implementation, reflection.

**Method Sheet:** The form where all the information needed for carrying out an activity is explained.

**Facilitator:** A person that has different roles/tasks at an event or activity, like moderating, presenting, visualising. A facilitator can also be a project manager, youth leader, ambassador, participant or an invited expert.

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