

HUMAN RIGHTS AND PEACE BUILDING

Human Rights and Peace Building were the Rural Youth Europe's annual themes 2017. The following methods aim to introduce the topics to the rural youth as well as help participants understand why the topics are related to their lives.

WORLD CAFE

Materials: Depends on what you want the session to be about, but space enough for 5 different stations is needed

Group size: 5 groups of 5 – 10 people

Time: 1,5 hours

How to: Divide the bigger group in to five smaller groups. Have 5 different stations at different locations (can be in the same room, or different rooms). After 15 minutes each group has to change stations (it works like a rotating system)

The stations could be:

- Introduction to Human Rights
- Examples from the Declaration of Human Rights
- Facts about where Human Rights are enforced in a good way
- Facts about where Human Rights are not enforced
- Examples and/or discussion on how to make others aware of the Human Rights

User comment: I have been participating in and facilitating this activity at several RYEurope events. It is a very good way to introduce someone to a new topic and cover several aspects of it in one session.

LIVING LIBRARY

Materials: Enough space for the different "books" to talk and discuss without disturbing the other "books"

Group size: x number of groups of 5 – 10 people

Time: 1 hour and 30 minutes (if there are 5 "books")

How to: In Living Library the participants get the opportunity to listen to stories of different people (books) and ask questions about their opinions, stories or lives. Depending on the topic of your seminar/event, the book give the participants the chance to "dig deeper" into different aspects of the main topic. The "books" could be people who have experience working with different organizations, who have overcome personal obstacles, who have achieved something important for the local society, someone who has an interesting job, etc.

User comment: I've been participating in and facilitating this activity, and I've also been a "book" in it. I find it to be a very good way to engage participants in a topic – personal experiences are usually a lot more interesting to listen to than reading off a power point presentation. The participants can also actively talk, discuss and ask questions, which ensures that you cover topics they are really interested in.

Divide the group in to x number of smaller groups (depending on how many books you have), and show the groups to their first “book”. Every “book” and group will have about 15 minutes to listen, talk and discuss. When the 15 minutes are up, the facilitator will ring a bell, sound an alarm or shout out so the groups know they have to move to the next “book”.

The “books” can be someone who:

- Has experience working with Human Rights in well-developed countries
- Has experience working with Human Rights in underdeveloped countries
- Has been living in an area where Human Rights are not enforced
- Has had to flee their country/is a refugee
- Has personal experience with events related to Human Rights
- Has “felt” Human Rights on their body (i.e. people with disabilities)

BRAINSTORMING

Reference:

<https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/brainstorm-productive> / <https://www.mindtools.com/brainstm.html>

Materials: Something to write with and on, flip chart and markers

Group size: 6 – 10

Time: Depends on the session

Introduction: Brainstorming can be used in several ways; to introduce participants to a new theme or topic (and assessing their knowledge about the topic as you go), or to come up with new ideas on how to solve different problems. Brainstorming combines a relaxed, informal approach to problem solving with lateral thinking. It encourages people to come up with thoughts and ideas than can, at first, seem a bit crazy. Some of these ideas can be crafted into original, creative solutions to a problem, while others can spark even more ideas. This help to get people unstuck by “jolting” them out of their normal ways of thinking. Regardless on the wanted outcome, here are a few tips, tricks and ideas to have in mind when planning a brainstorming session:

- **Come up with bad ideas first:**

- The best brainstorming sessions come when every participant feel comfortable throwing *all* of their ideas out there, whether they’re good or not. But, some participants might be worried they’ll sound stupid or uninformed if they come up with ideas that aren’t that well thought through. One way to make your participants feel comfortable and secure to share whatever comes to their mind, is to start the session with 10 – 15 minutes coming up with as many *bad* ideas as possible. The facilitator can start to show an example. This exercise will help you set a much more open and playful tone than a formal atmosphere would, and when the participants are done with the bad ideas, they can refocus on brainstorming ideas that could work. Alternatively; you can discuss why the bad ideas don’t work and set the direction for a good idea from there.

- **Break and build ideas:**

- When you have to come up with a new idea and are only a general level, try breaking the theme down into parts and details, seeing if other ideas branch from it. On the opposite hand, you can build up a more specific idea to have it cover a broader perspective.

- If you're introducing a new topic, ask the participants to first write down as many general sentences about the topic that come to mind (about 5 minutes). Share the answers in plenary. Then, ask the participants to write down as many specific sentences about the topic as possible (about 5 minutes). Share the answers in plenary and discuss the ideas that could be formed from the sentences.

- **Trade ideas**
 - Have each person in the room jot down two or three ideas on their own pieces of paper. Then, have them trade papers with other members of the team, and build off the other participants' ideas. The papers can be rotated several times, and when new ideas emerge the facilitator can start a group discussion.

- **Word storm**
 - Write down one word, and then brainstorm a whole slew of words that come to mind from that first word. Try thinking about the function of that word, its aesthetics, how it's used, metaphors that can be associated with it, and so on. Let the ideas flow naturally, and don't overthink it – this is meant to be a creative exercise.
 - Once you've listed out a bunch of words, group them together according to how they're related to one another. The goal is to come up with those less obvious words or phrases your audience might associate with whatever project, theme or topic you're working on.

- **Mind mapping**
 - Create a diagram starting with a central idea, and then branch out into major sub-topics, then sub-sub-topics. Mind maps can be created either on paper or a whiteboard, with post-its or in other creative ways.

- **Doodle**
 - Take an object related to your theme or topic, and visually break it down into its tiniest parts. So, if you start with the word "dog", you might draw paws, a tail and a collar. Thinking about all the elements of that object and the environment it is found in, will allow you to view an object in a new way.

- **Brainstorming in general**
 - During brainstorming sessions, people should avoid criticizing or rewarding ideas or thoughts. You're trying to open up possibilities and break down incorrect assumptions about the problem's limits. Judgement and analysis at this stage stunts the idea generation and limit creativity.
 - Evaluate ideas at the end of the session – this is the time to explore solutions further, for example by using more conventional approaches.

Human rights as an example: At the RYEurope Autumn Seminar in Austria 2017, I was part of facilitating making a campaign about Human Rights. Brainstorming was essential to come up with the best ideas, and here's an example on how we could have planned the sessions using these different brainstorming methods:

- To set the tone and creating a safe environment, we could start with **coming up with the bad ideas first**. This way we would make sure no one would be afraid to speak up.
- Second, we could move on to **breaking and building ideas**. We would break down the bad ideas from the previous sessions, discussing why they wouldn't work. Based on this, we would now have a list of what needs to be present to create a good campaign.
- Following this, we could use the method **trade ideas**. The list from the previous session would be visible on a flip-chart, and to involve everyone and giving them a sense of ownership of the campaign, a paper with all the ideas rotating around the room would help us reach that. Instead of this, we could also have tried the **word storm, mind mapping or doodle** method. Like trading ideas, these methods help include everyone. We could choose our words from the list we created while using the **breaking and building ideas** method.
- With the notes from **brainstorming in general**, we could then move on to facilitate a group discussion, talking about what the best approach for continuing working with the campaign would be.

Even more about brainstorming? Check out:

<https://business.tutsplus.com/articles/top-brainstorming-techniques--cms-27181>

https://sfv.fi/Site/Data/2337/Files/publikationer/tillsammans_eng2.pdf

GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Materials: Something to write with and on, access to information

Group size: 6 – 30

Time: Depends on the session

Introduction: Discussion methods are a variety of forums for open-ended, collaborative exchange of ideas among a facilitator and participants, or among participants, for the purpose of furthering the participants' thinking, learning, problem solving or understanding a theme or topic. Participants present multiple points of view, respond to the ideas of others, and reflect on their own ideas in an effort to build their knowledge, understanding or interpretation of the matter at hand. Discussions of any sort are supposed to help us develop a better perspective on issues by bringing out diverse viewpoints. Whenever we exchange differing views on an issue, we get a clearer picture of the problem/topic and are able to understand it (better). The understanding makes us better equipped to deal with the problem. This is precisely the main purpose of a discussion. The dictionary meaning of the word Group Discussion is to talk about a subject in detail. So, group discussion may refer to a communicative situation that allows its participants to express views and opinions and share with other participants. It's a systematic oral exchange of information, views and opinions about a topic, issue, problem or situation among members of a group who share certain common objectives.

Everyone who has ever facilitated a group discussion, know that there are some challenges coming with it. The desired discussion may not occur, the discussion can become aggressive, the session can become boring, or only two or three out of 20 speak their minds (if any at all). Based on these reasons the method can be easy to steer clear of, but these different group discussion methods (when planned and facilitated well) are a great way to remembering that sometimes talking can be more efficient than other, fancy methods! Regardless on the wanted outcome, here are a few methods, tips, tricks and ideas to have in mind when planning a group discussion session:

- **Philosophical chairs/forced debate**

Reference: <https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/speaking-listening-techniques/>

- This method is similar to the “**barometer method**”, listed in the “evaluation” section.
- Before starting the session, prepare several statements about your topic, that have two possible responses: agree or disagree. In the session, read them out loud. Depending on whether the participants agree or disagree with the statement, they move to one side of the room, or the other. From the spot they have chosen, the participants take turns defending their position. When participants choose different sides, a discussion is easily facilitated. Help out with questions if needed.
- **Variation:** Before the session starts, give the participants a short text each – about the different subtopics your statements will cover. Tell the participants to back up why they agree/disagree with the statement by using the texts.
- **Variation:** Give the participants the opportunity to choose from a variety of choices, ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”.
- **Variation:** Make your statements as provocative as possible, that the participants are likely to disagree with. A discussion will most likely occur instantly, and the facilitator help pinpointing the main issues from the conversation.

- **Pinwheel discussion**

Reference: <https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/speaking-listening-techniques/>

- Before starting the session, prepare three specific points of views to your main topic or theme. When the session starts, divide your participants in to 4 groups. Three of these groups are assigned to represent specific points of view. The fourth group is designated as “provocateurs”, tasked with making sure the discussion keeps going and stays challenging. One person from each group (the “speaker”) sits in a desk facing speakers from the other groups, so they form a square in the middle of the room. Behind each speaker, the remaining participants are seated: two right behind the speaker, then three behind them, and so on, forming a kind of triangle. From above, this would look like a pinwheel. The four speakers introduce and discuss questions they prepared ahead of time (this preparation is done with their groups). After some time passes, new participants rotate from the seats behind the speaker to the seats in the middle and continue the conversation.

- **Affinity mapping/affinity diagramming**

Reference: <https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/speaking-listening-techniques/>

- Give the participants a broad question or problem that is likely to result in lots of different ideas, such as “how can my organization make Human Rights visible?” or “what does my organization need to work better and be more efficient?”. Have the participants generate responses by writing ideas on post-it notes (one idea per note) and placing them in no particular arrangement on a wall, whiteboard, or chart paper. Once lots of ideas have been generated, have the participants begin grouping them into similar categories, then label the categories and discuss why the ideas fit within them, how the categories relate to one another, and so on.
- **Variation:** The participants are asked to write down their ideas and arranging them into categories, without talking. When everyone feel happy about the arrangement, facilitate a discussion on why the participants have placed the ideas where they have.
- **Variation:** The participants are asked to re-combine the ideas into new, different categories after the first round of discussion occurs. Discuss why the re-combination is a better option than the first outcome. A follow up session with i.e. brainstorming can be a good way to continue working on the ideas that have emerged.

- **Chat stations**

Reference: <https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/chat-stations/>

- This is a variation of “world café” adapted to work as a group discussion. It keeps the movement, interactivity and variety, while minimizing the preparation.
- Divide the group in to smaller groups. At each station, provide a discussion topic, issue or statement. The idea is to facilitate quick discussions in a safe environment (hence smaller groups), and can be used for ethical debates, exploring new material, analysing short texts, etc. When the participants have discussed each discussion topic, issue or statement, facilitate a group discussion with all the participants – going through all the different issues and arguments that came up while discussing at the stations.
- On top of the flexibility of this method as a cooperative learning tool, chat stations can also dramatically improve discussions in a larger group. Because the participants have fully explored each issue, topic or statement in the less-threatening chat station setting, they will be better

prepared to participate in a larger group discussion next. This method offers another way for less talkative participants to get more engaged and involved.

- **Group discussions in general**

Reference: <http://teachingcenter.wustl.edu/resources/teaching-methods/discussions/teaching-with-discussions/>

- **Accommodate different learning preferences:** Expect that your participants will bring into the session different learning preferences. I.e., while some may be active learners who prefer to solve problems in order to learn concepts, others are reflective learners who prefer to master concepts through uninterrupted reflection. Recognize your own learning preferences and make efforts to extend your approach beyond those preferences. In other words, do not assume that you can teach something in the same way that you learned it and get the same result with all your participants. You can be most effective if you combine teaching methods to reach as many participants as possible: i.e. combine verbal and visual explanations, explain concepts using both a “big-picture” and a detail-oriented approach, and give the participants opportunities for active learning and reflection.
- **Provide a structure:** Write an outline or list of guiding questions on the flip chart before you begin the discussion. Each session should have a clear beginning, middle, and end. Respond to participant contribution in ways that move the discussion forward and keep it focused on the topic at hand.
- **Summarize major ideas and write them on a flip chart:** When this is done at appropriate points during the session, picking out the most important ideas from the discussion and understanding their significance will be easier for the participants. Writing on a flip chart is particularly helpful for participants who are visual learners.
- **Use verbal and non-verbal cues to encourage participation:** Especially at the beginning of an event, call on every participant to answer questions, not just those who consistently raise their hands. Make eye contact and move around the room to engage the attention of all the participants and to communicate that you expect each of them to participate.
- **Integrate participant responses in to the discussion without making the discussion merely a participant-facilitator interaction:** Ask the participants to respond directly to one another’s ideas. The use of small-group discussions will allow the participants to become better acquainted and thus facilitate their communication with one another.
- **Create a balance between controlling the group dynamic and letting participants speak:** While you are in charge of facilitating the discussion from the perspective of an expert who knows a lot about the subject, the aim of the discussion is not to bring the participants around to your way of thinking, but rather to create the opportunity for the participants to think critically – to question assumptions, to consider multiple viewpoints, and to develop knowledge of the subject. Actively seek contributions from as many participants as possible in a given session; if a few participants want to speak all the time, remind them that you value their contributions but would like to hear from others as well.
- **Show respect for all questions and comments:** Listen carefully. Thank the participants for their contributions. Point out what is valuable about your participants’ arguments, no matter if you agree with them or not. Develop helpful responses to incorrect answers or comments that are not sufficiently related to the issue currently being discussed. Take participants’ ideas seriously: help them clarify their thinking by asking them to provide evidence for their arguments and to respond to ideas and arguments offered by other participants.

- **Do not answer your own questions:** Give the participants 5-10 seconds to think and formulate a response. If 10-15 seconds pass without anyone volunteering an answer and the participants are giving you puzzled looks, rephrase your question. Do not give in to the temptation to answer your own questions, which will condition the participants to hesitate before answering to see if you will supply “the answer”. Patience is key; do not be afraid of silence. The longer you wait for participants to respond, the more thoughtful and complex their responses are likely to be.
- **Combine discussions with other methods:** Plan to use brief lectures to introduce complex topics or to clarify the larger concepts that the current session will investigate. Beginning on the first day, use frequent small-group work: divide the participants in to groups of 2-4, then give each group a focused assignment: i.e. gathering information and finding examples, making presentations to share in plenary, etc. You can also assign participants brief writing assignments, such as writing a set of questions or a brief reflective piece that will serve as the basis for the next sessions’ discussion. Consider supplementing group discussions with threaded, online discussions that you monitor (i.e. before the participants get to the event). Small-group discussions, writing assignments, and online discussions can be effective methods for encouraging participation by participants who are uncomfortable speaking in large groups and for enabling participants to learn from one another. This is important to get that safe space and environment you want for your event.

- **A successful group discussion needs:**

Reference: http://wikieducator.org/Group_Discussion_Technique

- **Having a clear objective:** The participants need to know the purpose of group discussion so that they can concentrate during the discussion and contribute to achieving the group goal. An effective group discussion typically begins with a purpose stated by the facilitator.
- **Motivated interaction:** When there is a good level of motivation among the members, they learn to subordinate the personal interests to the group interest and the discussions are more fruitful.
- **Logical presentation:** Participants decide how they will organize the presentation of individual views, how an exchange of the views will take place, and how they will reach a group consensus. If the mode of interaction is not decided, few of the members in the group may dominate the discussion and thus will make the entire process meaningless.
- **Cordial atmosphere:** Development of a cooperative, friendly and cordial atmosphere avoids the confrontation between the group members.
- **Effective communication skills:** The success of a group discussion depends on an effective use of communication techniques. Like any other oral communication, clear pronunciation, simple language, right pitch are the pre-requisites of a group discussion. Non-verbal communication has to be paid attention to since means like body language convey a lot in any communication.
- **Preparation by all candidates:** When all the members participate, the group discussion becomes effective. Members need to encourage each other in the group discussion.
- **Leadership skills:** Qualities like initiation, logical presentation, encouraging all the group members to participate, and summarizing the discussion, all reflect the leadership qualities.

Human rights as an example: In 2017, the annual Rural Youth Europe topic was Human Rights and Peacebuilding. I participated in 4 RYEurope events that year and have therefore been part of several discussions with Human Rights as the main topic. Here are some examples on how these methods were used:

- **Philosophical chairs/forced debate:** This method was used at several of the events, as a way to introduce the participants to the main theme: Human Rights. We were given statements about our rural area and found out we all have (more or less) the same background. This gave us common grounds to continue the group discussions. Some of the statements were: I have a neighbour within 100 meters/the public transport runs frequently/there is a primary school within walking distance/as a child, I could choose from a variety of hobbies or after school activities.
- **Pinwheel discussion:** After finding common grounds of who we are as a group, we could have continued with the pinwheel discussion method. We could have been divided in groups and given tasks like “Human Rights should be enforced everywhere because...”, “Human Rights should not be enforced everywhere because...”, “Human Rights is good because...”, “Human Rights is not good because...”, etc. The discussion would give us more insight into why we want to work with Human Rights, and why it’s important.
- **Affinity mapping:** This method was also used at several of the events, as a way to find issues and then relating them to specific Human Rights. It was an interesting eye-opener, and a good way to see and discuss how Human Rights affects us all, everywhere.
- **Chat stations:** Different variations of this method was used throughout the events I participated in. We were presented different situations, issues and ideas about Human Rights, and were asked to discuss them in smaller groups. After a certain amount of time, we gathered in bigger groups, and discussed the outcomes. It was a good way to make the main discussion more interesting, because we had been given time to dig deeper into the topic beforehand.
- When it comes to **Group discussions in general** and what **a successful group discussion needs**, I find the lists here to be extremely useful. I am sure the facilitators at the events I attended had several of these thoughts in the back of their minds, and I strongly believe that’s why the discussions were a success. Preparing is key and knowledge is power, and that’s why these two lists are important to bring with you before planning and facilitating an event!

FLOWER POWER

Reference: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/flower-power>

Time: 80 minutes

Overview: At the end of this activity you will have a wall of flowers that represent the diversity of the group. This is a creative activity that leads into a discussion about human rights in general: what they are, why they exist, and how we should protect them

Related rights: all

Objectives:

- To develop understanding about the connection between human needs, personal wellbeing and human rights
- To develop skills to reflect and analyse
- To foster solidarity and respect for diversity

Materials:

- A plain wall with enough space to hang all the drawings
- Copies of the handout sheet, one per person
- A pencil for each participant; erasers; coloured markers to share
- Tape to hang the drawings on the wall
- Flipchart and markers

Handout: <https://rm.coe.int/1680089ac3>

Preparation: Photocopy the handout sheet, one per person

Instructions: Explain that this activity will develop into a discussion about human rights, but that they are going to start by thinking about what it means to be human

Part 1: Identifying what it means to be a complete human being

1. Explain that to feel complete as a human being a person needs to have certain needs fulfilled. For instance, for basic survival we all need to have food and water, sleep and air to breathe. We also need safety: personal and financial security and good health. We also need love and belonging: friendship, intimacy and a family. We also need esteem: to feel accepted and valued by others and to feel that we can develop to our full potential and feel personally fulfilled.

2. Tell participants that each of them is to draw a flower to represent their own needs as human beings.

The flower should have eight petals:

- Basic needs
- Personal security
- Financial security
- Health
- Friendship
- Family
- Esteem
- Personal fulfilment

The sizes of the petals should correspond to how important each of the eight needs is for them at this time in their lives. Draw an example on a flipchart as you explain but emphasize that this is only an example; each person's flower will be different.

3. Give out the paper, pens and coloured markers and ask each participant to draw their own personal flower in the middle of the paper leaving space around. Explain that there are no right or wrong, good or bad "answers"; everyone's flower will be unique. To motivate people, say that there should be no names on the paper. Give them ten minutes to do this stage.

4. Now ask participants to think about the conditions that have to exist so that they can blossom and be complete human beings. Ask people to draw leaves around the flower to represent these conditions and to write key words on the leaves. Allow ten minutes for this.

5. Finally ask participants to fix their work on a wall to make an exhibition.

Part 2: Linking human needs to human rights

6. Allow participants to look at the flowers. Then ask them to get into small groups of 3-4 and ask them to discuss the following questions:

- Are there any links between human rights and the flowers and the leaves? If so, what are the links?
- Are human rights important? Why?
- What do the words "human rights" mean to you?

Now ask each group to give their feedback, and then go on to the debriefing and evaluation

Debriefing and evaluation

Start with a short review of the activity, then go on to review the small group discussions and find out what participants learned about human rights:

- Did you enjoy the activity? Why/why not?
- Was it hard to decide about the size of the petals? Are all of the eight needs important for a fulfilled life?
- Are there other needs that are not represented by the petals, that is, are there other petals to add?
- Did anyone write anything in the centre of the flower?
- Are you surprised by any similarities and differences between different people's petals? What does this tell you about human beings?
- What are the consequences for the individual of having damaged petals?
- What is needed to protect the different petals? What did the participants write on the leaves?
- Are there any connections between what was written on the leaves and the idea of human rights?
- What did you learn about your own identity as a human being? How does this relate to human rights?
- Which human rights do we need most to let us blossom and grow to be complete human beings (where you live)?
- Are some human rights more important than others? For whom? When? Where?
- Why do we need to be on our guard to protect and develop human rights?
- What can we do to best protect human rights?
- Are there any needs not covered by any of the existing human rights conventions?

LANGUAGE BARRIER

Reference: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/language-barrier>

Time: 60 minutes

Overview: This is a simulation of the difficulties that refugees face when applying for asylum.

Issues raised include:

- The frustrations and emotional factors refugees have to face
- Overcoming the language barrier
- Discrimination during the application procedure

Related rights:

- The right to seek and enjoy asylum
- The right not to be discriminated against on the basis of ethnicity or country of origin
- The right to be considered innocent until proven guilty

Objectives:

- To raise awareness about discrimination by border police and immigration authorities
- To develop intercultural communication skills
- To foster empathy with refugees and asylum seekers

Materials:

- Copies of the “Asylum application” handout, one for each participant
- Pens, one per person

Handout: <https://rm.coe.int/1680082983>

Preparation: Arrange the room so you can sit behind a desk and role play the formality of a bureaucratic official.

Instructions

1. Let participants arrive but do not greet anyone or acknowledge their presence. Don't say anything about what is going to happen.
2. Wait a few minutes after the scheduled start time and then hand out the copies of the “Application for Asylum” and the pens, one to each participant.
3. Tell them that they have five minutes to complete the form, but don't say anything else. Ignore all questions and protests. If you have to communicate, speak another language (or a made-up language) and use gestures. Keep all communication to a minimum. Remember that the refugees' problems are not your concern; your job is only to hand out the forms and collect them again!
4. Greet any latecomers curtly (for example, “You are late. Take this from and fill it in. You have only got a few minutes left to do it.”)
5. When five minutes are up, collect the form without smiling or making any personal contact.

6. Call a name from the completed forms and tell that person to come forward. Look at the form and make up something about how they have filled in the form, for instance, “You didn’t answer question 8” or “I see you answered ‘no’ to question 6. Application dismissed.” Tell the person to go away. Don not enter into any discussion. Go straight to call the next person to come forward.

7. Repeat this process several times. It is not necessary to review all the applications, only continue for as long as necessary for the participants to understand what is happening.

8. Finally break out of your role and invite participants to discuss what happened.

Debriefing and evaluation

Start by asking people how they felt during the activity and then move on to discuss what happened, what they have learned, and the links with human rights

- How did the participants feel when they were filling out and unintelligible form?
- How realistic was the simulation of an asylum-seeker’s experience?
- Do you think that in your country asylum seekers are treated fairly during their application for asylum? Why? Why not?
- What could be the consequences for someone whose asylum application is refused?
- Have the participants ever been in a situation where they could not speak the language and were confronted by an official, for instance, a police officer or a ticket-controller? How did it feel?
- Which human rights are at stake in this activity?
- What possibilities do asylum seekers have to claim protection from violations of their rights?
- How many asylum seekers are there in your country? Do you think your country takes its fair share of refugees?
- Which rights are asylum seekers denied in your country?

RIGHTS BINGO!

Reference: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/rights-bingo->

Time: 60 minutes

Overview: This is a simple quiz and variation of the game, Bingo! in which people share their knowledge and experiences of human rights

Related rights: Any human rights

Objectives:

- To learn about universal human rights and their relevance for everyone everywhere
- To develop listening and critical thinking skills
- To encourage respect for other people and their opinions

Materials:

- One copy of the quiz sheet and pencil per person
- Flipchart paper and markers

Handout: <https://rm.coe.int/168008298a>

Preparation:

- Make a copy of the quiz sheet on a large sheet of paper or flipchart paper

- Familiarise yourself with the basic rights listed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Conventions on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

UDHR: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/the-universal-declaration-of-human-rights>

CRC: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child>

Instructions

1. Hand out the quiz sheets and pencils
2. Explain that people should find a partner and ask them one of the questions on the sheet. The key words of the answer should be noted down in the relevant box
3. The pairs then split up and find others to pair up with
4. The aim of the game is not only to get an answer in each box but also to get a different person to answer each question
5. Whoever gets an answer in every box first shouts out "Bingo!". They win.
6. Move on to the discussion. Take the questions in the first box and ask people in turn to share the answers they received. List the key words on the flipchart. Allow short comments at this stage
7. When the chart is complete, go back and discuss the answers in each box more fully

Debriefing and evaluation

- Were all the questions related to human rights? Which rights?
- Which questions were the hardest to answer? Why?
- Which questions were the most controversial? Why are rights controversial?
- How did people know about human rights and human rights violations? Do they trust the sources of the information?

TAKE A STEP FORWARD

Reference: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/take-a-step-forward>

Time: 60 minutes

Group size: 10 – 30

Overview: We are all equal, but some are more equal than others. In this activity participants take on roles and move forward depending on their chances and opportunities in life.

Related rights:

- The right to equality in dignity and rights
- The right to education
- The right to a standard living adequate for good health and well-being

Objectives:

- To raise awareness about inequality of opportunity
- To develop imagination and critical thinking
- To foster empathy with other who are less fortunate

Materials:

- Role cards
- An open space (a corridor, large room or outdoors)
- Tape or CD player and soft/relaxing music

- A hat

Handouts: <https://rm.coe.int/168008298e>

Preparation:

- Read the instructions carefully. Review the list of “situations and events” and adapt it to the group that you are working with.
- Make the role cards, one per participant. Copy the (adapted) sheet either by hand or on a photocopier, cut out the strips, fold them over and put them in a hat.

Instructions:

1. Create a calm atmosphere with some soft background music. Alternatively, ask the participants for silence.
2. Ask participants to take a role card out of the hat. Tell them to keep it to themselves and not to show it to anyone else.
3. Invite them to sit down (preferably on the floor) and to read carefully what is on their role card.
4. Now ask them to begin get into role. To help, read out some of the following questions, pausing after each one, to give people time to reflect and build up a picture of themselves and their lives;
 - What was your childhood like? What sort of house did you live in? What kind of games did you play? What sort of work did your parents do?
 - What is your everyday life like now? Where do you socialize? What do you do in the morning, in the afternoon, in the evening?
 - What sort of lifestyle do you have? Where do you live? How much money do you earn each month? What do you do in your leisure time? What do you do in your holidays?
 - What excites you, and what are you afraid of?
5. Now ask people to remain absolutely silent as they line up beside each other (like on a starting line).
6. Tell the participants that you are going to read out a list of situations or events. Every time that they can answer “yes” to the statement, they should take a step forward. Otherwise, they should stay where they are and not move.
7. Read out the situations one at a time. Pause for a while between each statement to allow people time to step forward and to look around to take note of their positions relative to each other.
8. At the end invite everyone to take note of their final positions. Then give them a couple of minutes to come out of role before debriefing in plenary.

Debriefing and evaluation:

Start by asking participants about what happened and how they feel about the activity and then go on to talk about the issues raised and what they learned.

- How did people feel stepping forward – or not?
- For those who stepped forward often, at what point did they begin to notice that others were not moving as fast as they were?
- Did anyone feel that there were moments when their basic human rights were being ignored?
- Can people guess each other’s roles? (Let people reveal their roles during this part of the discussion)
- How easy or difficult was it to play the different roles? How did they imagine what the person they were playing was like?
- Does the exercise mirror society in some way? How?

- Which human rights are at stake for each of the roles? Could anyone say that their human rights were not being respected or that they did not have access to them?
- What first steps could not be taken to address the inequalities in society?

SEE THE ABILITY!

Reference: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/see-the-ability->

Time: 120 minutes

Group size: 6 – 36

Overview: A practical activity to encourage empathy with people with disabilities. Among the issues addressed are:

- The obstacles disabled people face in integrating into society
- Perceptions of the rights of the disabled as basic human rights

Related rights:

- The right not to be discriminated against
- Equality in dignity and rights
- The right to social security

Objectives:

- To raise awareness about some of the everyday problems faced by disabled people
- To develop skills to respond to, the needs of disabled people
- To promote empathy and solidarity

Materials:

For the introduction:

- A sheet of paper and a pen per participant

For part 2, per pair:

- A plastic bag containing a cabbage or lettuce leaf, a pencil, a stick of chalk, a leaf (from any tree), a coloured sheet of paper and a bottle or can of any soft drink
- A blindfold
- A sheet of paper and a pen

For part 3, per pair:

- 1 role card
- One sheet of paper and a pen

For part 4:

- Wheelchairs, one between eight people
- Space for creating an obstacle course (a second room would be preferable, but not absolutely necessary). Alternatively, access to outdoors would present a further option.
- Obstacles, for example, tables and chairs, planks of wood, piles of old newspaper, etc.
- One large sheet of paper or board and markers
- A watch or timer

Handout: <https://rm.coe.int/168008298b>

Preparation:

- Make the role cards. Either choose one of the situations suggested with this activity or develop your own

- If possible, have a second room that you can prepare in advance for the obstacle race, or better still go outdoors where you will be able to make the obstacle track over more challenging terrain.
- If you are setting it up indoors, then use tables and chairs to make narrow passages and planks of wood or old newspapers on the floor to substitute for naturally difficult terrain.

Instructions: The activity is organised in four parts: part 1, the introduction, part 2, the blindfold walk, part 3, signing, and part 4, the wheelchair race.

Part 1. Introduction (10 minutes)

1. Explain that the activity focuses on three particular disabilities: blindness, deafness and muteness, and paralysis.
2. Invite the participants to think for a few minutes about how they would like – and how they would not like – to be treated if they were disabled. Let them write down a few key words.
3. Now ask participants to write down what they would be most afraid of, if they were disabled.
4. When this has been done, ask the participants to turn over their papers and to get ready to “step into reality”.

Part 2. The blindfold walk

1. Ask people to get into pairs. Hand out the blindfolds. One person from each pair is to be the disabled person and the other is their guide. It is the guide’s responsibility to ensure the safety of their partner at all times. They may only answer simple questions related to safety with a “yes” or a “no” answer.
2. Ask the guides to take their partners for a 5-minute walk around and about, including up or down stairs or outside if possible.
3. On returning to the room let the guides lead their partners to their chairs. But there is a surprise on the chair! A Bag! What is in it?
4. The blind players have to identify the contents. The guide’s job is to write down their guesses.
5. Then let the “blind” people take off the blindfolds and see the objects. Invite the partners to briefly review their experiences and surprises with each other.
6. Give people a few minutes to come out of their roles and then move to part 3.

Part 3. Signing

1. Tell the pairs that they are to swap over; the guides are now to be the disabled, this time people who are mute (can’t speak), and the partners are the able-bodied helpers.
2. Hand out one of the situation cards to each disabled player. They must not show the cards to their partners. Give a piece of paper and pen to the helpers.
3. Explain that the mute players have to convey their problem to their helper. They may not speak, write or draw. The helpers must write down what they understand the message to be about.
4. When the “mute” player has communicated as much as they can, he/she should reveal the role card to their helper. Invite the pairs to briefly review their intentions, problems and frustrations.

Part 4. The wheelchair obstacle race

1. Point out the obstacle course to the participants. Explain that the winner is the person who gets round in the fastest time. There are penalties for crashing into obstacles on the way.
2. Record the results on the large piece of paper.

3. When all who wish to have had a turn, take a short break and then go on to the debriefing and evaluation.

Debriefing and evaluation: Take this in plenary. Start with a review of parts 2, 3 and 4 of the activity, and then go on to reflect on what people knew at the beginning and about what they have learned as a result of their experiences.

1. Start with the blindfold walk: ask both those who were blindfolded and those who were the helpers to share their reactions:
 - a. How did they feel during the exercise?
 - b. What was most difficult? What was funny? What was scary?
 - c. How hard was it to trust and to be trustworthy?
2. Then go on to review part 2, signing:
 - a. How did each of them feel during the exercise?
 - b. What was most difficult? What was funny? What was scary?
 - c. Was it frustrating to sign and not to be understood?
 - d. Was it frustrating or embarrassing not to understand?
3. Next review the wheelchair obstacle race:
 - a. How did people feel not being so mobile?
 - b. What was most difficult? What was funny? What was scary?
4. Now review the fears and expectations people expressed at the beginning of the exercise. Ask people to look at the key words they wrote down.
 - a. Were some of their fears confirmed during the activity?
 - b. How did people try to help their partner?
 - c. How was the help being received?
 - d. How easy is it to assess how much help to give?
5. What did people fear about being disabled? What did they base their fears on? Have people ever been afraid of becoming disabled as a result of an accident or illness?
6. What was the most surprising thing people learned through the activity?
7. Do people know anyone who is blind or mute or confined to a wheelchair? What is their social life like? How do other people react to them?
8. Look at the environment in the building and in the streets nearby, how “disability friendly” are they?
9. What can and should be done to ensure that equality and dignity of people who are disabled?
10. Are disability rights also a matter of human rights? Which rights in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) are particularly relevant?
11. What can your school, association or local youth group do to promote the equality and dignity of people with disabilities?

3 THINGS

Reference: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/3-things>

Time: 30 minutes

Group size: Any (small groups: 5-6)

Overview: This activity uses discussions and diamond ranking* to help people understand what it is like to suddenly flee one’s home

Related rights:

- Right to seek asylum in other countries from persecution
- Freedom of religion or belief
- Freedom of opinion and information

Objectives:

- To develop understanding about what it is like to have to flee your home
- To practice decision making and consensus building skills
- To foster empathy and solidarity with refugees

Materials:

- Post-its or small squares of paper (approximately 8cm x 8cm), 3 per participant
- Pens or pencils, one per participant

Instructions:

1. Introduce the topic of migration by brainstorming the reasons why people move to live elsewhere.
2. Explain that in the activity they are going to imagine that they are being forced to flee their homes. Refer to the brainstorm and point out the “push factors” that cause people to flee, for instance war, natural disasters, persecution or terrorism. Then ask the group to guess how many displaced people there are in the world.
3. Now ask them to get into small groups, and hand out the small pieces of paper and pencils.
4. Ask everyone to imagine that they have to flee their home suddenly for a particular reason and that they can only take three things with them. Which three things would they take? They should write one thing on each piece of paper.
5. Next, ask each person in turn to present their choices and to explain the reasons for their decisions.
6. Now tell the participants to work together to discuss the various choices and reasons, to try to come to a consensus, and to prioritize the items using diamond ranking*.
7. Finally let them go round and see the results of each group’s work.

Debriefing and evaluation: Begin by reviewing how each group ranked the items and then go on to discuss what participants learned, and what the implications are for human rights.

- Were there any surprising items people wanted to take with them?
- Was it easy to rank the items? What sorts of differences of opinion were there within the groups?
- How similar or how different were the different group’s rankings?
- How practical were people? Did they think mainly about their physical survival or did they also think about their emotional or spiritual needs?
- How difficult would it be if you really had to flee?
- What would people miss most if they had to flee?
- Do they know anyone who has fled their home?
- Is the activity realistic? Can people always choose what to take with them?
- What about children and young people? Are their specific needs likely to be taken into account when their parents are packing?
- What can we do to draw attention to the needs of refugees in our community (or across the world)?
- Which human rights specifically protect refugees?

ALL EQUAL – ALL DIFFERENT

Reference: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/45>

Time: 40 minutes

Group size: 6 – 60 (small groups 3-4)

Overview: This is a short quiz, provocative enough to be interesting in itself, but also the basis for an effective group discussion.

Related rights:

- Equality in dignity
- The right to rights and freedoms without distinction of any kind
- The right to a nationality

Objectives:

- To expand understanding about the universality of human rights
- To develop skills to read information critically and independently
- To foster awareness of ethnocentrism and prejudice in themselves and others, and to develop intercultural learning skills

Materials:

- Handout
- Pens or pencils, one per person
- A large sheet of paper (A3) or flipchart and marker pen

Handout: <https://rm.coe.int/168008254d>

Preparation: Copy the handout, one per participant. Alternatively, write it on a blackboard or use a projector.

Instructions:

1. Tell the participants that the following activity is a sort of quiz, but that the purpose is not to see who has got it right and who has got it wrong; it is just a starting point.
2. Hand out or display the two quotations. Allow five minutes for the participants to read them.
3. Then ask them individually to decide:
 - a. The source of the first text; which book or document is it an extract from?
 - b. Which country/region of the world the author of the second text comes from?
4. When everyone is ready, ask the participants to get into small groups of about three people. Give them 20 minutes to discuss and analyse their individual choices. They should think about the following questions and if possible come up with a collective answer:
 - a. Why did they choose one answer in preference to others?
 - b. What do the text say about the authors?
 - c. Why did the authors write these texts?
5. When the groups have finished, go round collecting the answers to question a) from each group. Invite the groups to state the reasons that led them to their choices. Then repeat the round collecting answers to question b). Record the answers on the flip chart.
6. Reveal the author, Said Al Andalusi (from Spain), and proceed to the debriefing and evaluation.

Debriefing and evaluation: Start with a brief review of the activity and then, if you feel the group is ready for it, go on to introduce the notions of prejudice and ethnocentrism. Address the following questions (either in plenary or you can have smaller groups if needed):

- Were participants surprised by the solution?
- How did people make their original individual choices? Were they based on guesswork? Intuition? Or real knowledge?
- Did people change their minds about their choices during the discussions in small groups? What made them change their minds? Peer pressure? Good arguments?
- How did people defend their choices in the small group discussions? Did they stick to their choices tentatively or strongly?
- Why did the author describe people from the North the way he did?
- What clues does the second text give us about the author, about his looks and about his culture?
- Can participants think of examples when they heard of or read about other people being addressed in similar ways? How would it feel to be considered as some kind of inferior people?
- When people are not valued for what they are, what consequences often occur? Can they think of examples from history? And from the present?
- What should we do to encounter the effects of prejudice? Are there people or groups in the participants' areas or countries that are also the subject of prejudice? Which ones?
- Education is one way to combat prejudice. What else should be done?

CHILDRENS RIGHTS

Reference: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/52>

Time: 60 minutes

Group size: Any (small groups: 3-4)

Overview: This activity uses diamond ranking* to promote discussion about the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC), including:

- Fundamental human rights and the special rights of the child under the CRC
- Duties and responsibilities under the Convention
- How to claim the rights

Related rights:

- The rights of the child (all)
- The right to express freely views on all matters affecting him/her
- The right to protection from economic exploitation
- The right to rest and leisure and to enjoy his/her own culture

Objectives:

- To provide knowledge about the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- To develop skills to review information critically and relate it to everyday experience
- To stimulate feelings of responsibility, solidarity, justice and equality

Materials:

- Statement cards – one set per small group
- A large sheet of paper to make a wall chart and marker pens
- Enough space for small groups to work independently

Handout: <https://rm.coe.int/1680082553>

Preparation:

- Refer to the abridged version of the CRC (link). List the Articles on the large sheet of paper to make a wall chart.
- Review the statement cards provided and refer to the CRC. Decide which Articles will promote the most interesting discussion with your particular group. Consider which issues are most relevant to the group members and which will be the most controversial. If appropriate, choose other Rights and make your own cards.
- Prepare one set of cards for each small group. Put each set in an envelope so that they don't get mixed up!

Instructions:

1. Start with a brief review of the CRC. Ask what people know about it. Point out the wall chart and go over the main Articles.
2. Ask participants to get into small groups of three to four people. Hand out the envelopes with the statement cards.
3. Explain the diamond ranking* procedure. Each small group is to discuss the nine statements and consider how relevant each one is to their own lives. They should then arrange them in a diamond pattern in order of importance to them. They should lay the most important statements on the table. Underneath it, they should lay, side by side, the two next most important statements. Underneath these, they should lay out the next three statements of moderate importance. The fourth row should have two cards and the fifth row one card, the statement that they thought was the least important. In this way their cards will lie in the shape of a diamond.
4. Give the groups 25 minutes to discuss and decide the order of ranking.
5. When all the small groups have finished, let people walk around the room to see how each group ranked the statements. Then call everyone into plenary for a debriefing.

Debriefing and evaluation: Start by inviting each group in turn to present the results of their discussions. Then go on to review how participants enjoyed the activity and what they learned.

- How do the different groups' diamonds compare? What are the similarities and differences?
- Why do different people have different priorities?
- People can say that a particular right is more important than another in my community, but it is not correct to say that one right is more important than the other per se. Why?
- As a result of listening to others, do any of the groups wish to reconsider their own decisions about the ranking of the cards? Which arguments were the most persuasive?
- In general, which rights are not respected in your community, and why?
- Are there any rights which are not in the Convention that you think should be included?
- Why do children need their own Convention?
- If children should have their own Convention, is there not a case for a Convention for young people aged 18 to 30? If so, what special rights should such a convention for young people contain?
- It is one thing for children to have rights under the CRC, but, in reality, how realistic is it for them to claim them?
- How can children claim their rights?

- If participation in the democratic process is one way for people to claim their rights, what can the participants do now to begin to “claim their rights” at home and in their school or club? Which rights are particularly relevant to the young people in the group?
- Is the “mosquito” device designed to dispel young people from public places used anywhere in your town? Which rights of young people does it violate?
- To whom, in your society, can children turn, if they know of serious violations of their rights?

JUST A MINUTE

Reference: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/just-a-minute>

Time: 40 minutes

Group size: Any

Overview: In this activity, people have to be quick and inventive to talk for one minute on the relationship between sports and human rights.

Related rights: All

Objectives:

- To appreciate how human rights are interconnected and invisible
- To develop critical thinking
- To cultivate self-confidence to express personal opinions

Materials:

- Statements, one per participant
- A hat
- A watch with a second hand, or a timer

Handout: <https://rm.coe.int/1680082982>

Preparation:

- Make a copy of the handout sheet and cut out the statements
- Fold the strips of paper over and put them into a hat

Instructions:

1. Ask people to sit in a circle.
2. Pass round the hat. Ask each person in turn, without looking, to dip into the hat and take out one slip of paper.
3. Participants then have 5 minutes to prepare to talk non-stop for one minute on the statement written on their slip of paper. The rules are no hesitations and no repetitions.
4. Go round the circle and ask each person in turn to give their “speech”.
5. After each “speech”, allow two or three minutes for short comments. If people have a lot to discuss, make a note of the topic and agree to return to it at the end.
6. When everyone has had their turn, go back and finish any discussions that had to be cut short.
7. Then go on to the debriefing and evaluation.

Debriefing and evaluation: Start by reviewing how the activity went and then go on to talk about the issues that were raised and finally the connections with human rights.

- Was it difficult to talk non-stop on the topics for one minute?

- Which were the toughest topics to talk about and why?
- Which of the statements was the most controversial and why?
- What was the most surprising piece of information people heard?
- Which human rights were at stake in each of the statements?
- Is the right to sport a human right? If so, how is it enshrined in the various human rights documents?
- Does everyone in your community have access to sporting activities of their choice? If not, why not? What can be done to remedy this?

* Diamond ranking

(<https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/using-compass-for-human-rights-education#ranking>)

For diamond ranking you need nine statement cards. People negotiate on which is the most important statement, then on which are two second-most important, then the 3 statements of moderate importance and so on as shown in the diagram. Because issues are rarely clear cut, diamond ranking is often a more appropriate method than simple ranking. It is less contrived and therefore more acceptable to participants. It also gives better opportunities for consensus building. A variation of the ranking method is to write eight statements and to leave one card blank for the participants themselves to write one.

The Diamond Ranking

