

# Understanding & promoting **ROMA INCLUSION** in education



**ACTIVITIES FOR  
TEACHER TRAININGS  
AND WORK IN  
SCHOOLS**

THE EUROPEAN  
WERGELAND  
CENTRE



COUNCIL OF EUROPE  
  
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE



# CONTENTS

<b>4</b>	<b>Introduction</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Topic 1: INCLUSION &amp; HUMAN RIGHTS</b>
10	ACTIVITY 1: THE RIVER OF LIFE
12	ACTIVITY 2: TAKE A STEP FORWARD
16	ACTIVITY 3: THE LAKE OF FROZEN COMPETENCES
<b>18</b>	<b>Topic 2: STEREOTYPES &amp; PREJUDICES</b>
20	ACTIVITY 1: ODD ONE OUT
22	ACTIVITY 2: EURO-RAIL À LA CARTE
25	ACTIVITY 3: FOREIGN CHILD
<b>29</b>	<b>Topic 3: ROMA CULTURE &amp; HISTORY</b>
30	ACTIVITY 1: ROMA BINGO
34	ACTIVITY 2: FLOWER OF IDENTITY
36	ACTIVITY 3: FIGHTERS FOR ROMA RIGHTS
<b>42</b>	<b>Topic 4: BUILDING INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS</b>
44	ACTIVITY 1: WHERE DO YOU STAND
46	ACTIVITY 2: A LETTER TO THE SCHOOL
48	ACTIVITY 3: BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE SCHOOL
49	ACTIVITY 4: TOWARDS A DEMOCRATIC SCHOOL POLICY
51	ACTIVITY 5: TO WHAT EXTEND ARE WE AN INCLUSIVE & DEMOCRATIC SCHOOL COMMUNITY?
<b>56</b>	<b>References</b>
<b>57</b>	<b>Additional information</b>

# INTRODUCTION

This booklet was developed by the European Wergeland Centre (EWC) as a resource for teacher training and classroom use, with the goal of promoting Roma inclusion in education.

It draws on EWC's extensive experience working with teachers, teacher educators, school leaders, and civil society actors to advance Roma inclusion both in and through education. This work has been done in collaboration with partners in Romania, Slovakia, and Bulgaria.

The booklet offers a selection of activities that highlights four key topics which are essential for providing quality and inclusive education: inclusion & human rights, stereotypes & prejudices, Roma culture & history, and building inclusive schools.

For each topic you will find practical methods and activities designed for teachers and educators to enhance inclusive teaching practices. The activities are inspired by the Council of Europe's manuals on democracy and human rights education, as well as EWC's own expertise.

The activities support the transformation of schools into welcoming, equitable environments where all students—including those from minority backgrounds, and especially Roma students—can thrive and reach their full potential.

Creating inclusive and democratic schools is a long-term process that requires ongoing commitment, reflection, and collaboration. It involves building the motivation, skills, and courage to promote equity, challenge discrimination, and support meaningful participation for all.

Real change happens not just through policy, but through the everyday actions of teachers, students, school leaders and the school community, working together with openness and respect. These activities provide practical tools, while also encouraging continuous reflection on how we engage with diversity, respect one another, and address injustice.

We hope that this booklet will strengthen educators' skills and competences in engaging with diversity and promoting inclusive practices fostering a safe and inclusive learning environment for all.

**European Wergeland Center  
Oslo April 2025**

# COMPETENCES FOR DEMOCRACY = COMPETENCES FOR INCLUSION

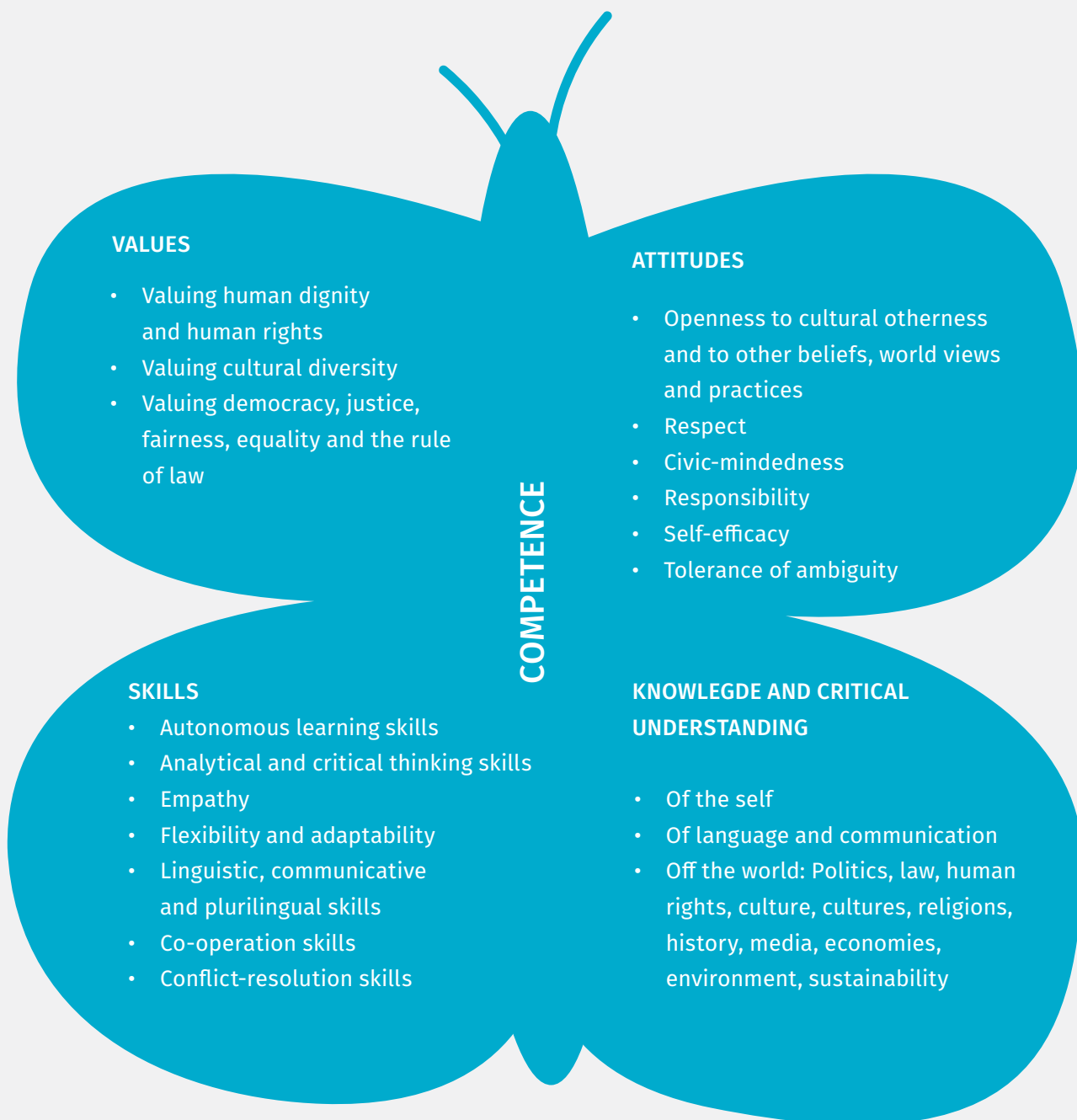
Inclusion and human rights are fundamental to a democratic society — and essential values within any educational setting.

By strengthening what are often referred to as democratic competences, we simultaneously foster the skills and attitudes needed for inclusion and for living together in diverse communities.

The Council of Europe has developed a model outlining the key competences necessary for building a lasting democratic and inclusive culture. These include values, attitudes, skills, and knowledge that empower individuals to actively contribute to inclusive and democratic societies.

**Read more on the Council of Europe Model  
of Competences - Reference Framework  
of Competences for a Democratic Culture  
(RFCDC)**





# TOPIC 1

## INCLUSION & HUMAN RIGHTS



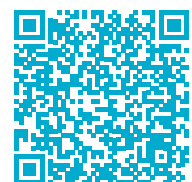
Inclusion and human rights are fundamental to a democratic society and essential values in any educational environment. Promoting inclusion means ensuring that every individual—regardless of background, identity, or ability—has equitable access to opportunities and participation. Human rights provide a universal framework for dignity, freedom, and justice for all.

The following activities provide practical tools for exploring human rights principles and offer meaningful opportunities to understand and experience the many dimensions of inclusion. They invite learners to reflect on real-life situations, develop empathy, and actively contribute to fostering a culture of inclusion and rights-based thinking within their schools and communities.

They address the following competences:

- Valuing human dignity and human rights
- Valuing cultural diversity
- Civic mindedness (active participation and inclusive communities)
- Empathy

**Read more on the Council of Europe Model  
of Competences - Reference Framework  
of Competences for a Democratic Culture  
(RFCDC)**



# ACTIVITY 1:

## THE RIVER OF LIFE

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*We are shaped by our experiences. This activity invites participants to explore their identities and consider how personal experiences of injustice or exclusion can become powerful tools for creating a more inclusive future. While originally designed with teachers in mind, the activity can be adapted to reflect a wide range of life experiences.*

**DURATION:** 90 minutes

**PARTICIPANTS:** all are welcome

**YOU NEED:**

- PowerPoint and projector
- Music
- A4 papers and colored pencils, markers

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### IMPLEMENTATION:

1. Invite participants to sit comfortably. Introduce the metaphor, the «river of life» by projecting a beautiful image of a river meandering towards the horizon. On the tunes of a relaxing music, guide the participants to visualize their path leading up to today, while offering prompts like:

*This river represents your life experiences so far. A peaceful flow at times. Sometimes high tides, sometimes deep waters. The muddy colour after the rain and the crystal shine at the arrival of spring. Where is the source of this river? Go back in time and think about your childhood. How was the house in which you grew up? The children you played with. Or maybe you weren't always at the heart of the game? And how was the school where you went? Were you always part of the group? Or sometimes excluded? Those who didn't embrace who you are, were they your colleagues? Or the teacher? Moving on, you went to university. Were you the student from the rural area, which all the city people looked down upon? And then you became the teacher you are today. How was your first day in the new working place? Did somebody organise a welcome party? Or did nobody notice you were there? Do they know when your birthday is? Do they know what makes you happy and what worries you about your job? Is this the school you work at today? How do you feel every day when entering this school? What makes you feel good? Do pupils feel the same? What forms of exclusion do you witness today? What does the school do in order to counter that?*

2. Once the story is over, ask participants to draw the river of their life on an A4 paper, marking down their experiences of rejection and exclusion.
3. Let the participants share the instances when they felt excluded in pairs or small groups.
4. In a large group, ask participants to identify the reasons for their exclusion.
5. Together, categorize and write them on a flipchart (e.g. social status, physical appearance, ethnic background, etc.).
6. In small groups, ask participants to share among themselves what their school does to counter exclusion. Each group writes their ideas on a flipchart paper and then presents them to the others.
7. To conclude, ask participants to write on the same paper three long-term goals they want to achieve for their school, from an inclusion perspective.
8. End with a definition of what is inclusive education.

#### FOR FACILITATORS:

This activity can be continued with the activity «An inclusive school» (see page 48), in which participants develop a vision of an inclusive school and define concrete steps for implementation.

## ACTIVITY 2:

# TAKE A STEP FORWARD

*This activity is a powerful role-play that explores the idea that while we are all equal in principle, not everyone has the same privileges or opportunities. Participants will step into different roles and move forward—or stay behind—based on the advantages or challenges their assigned identities face in life.*

**DURATION:** 90 minutes

**PARTICIPANTS:** all are welcome

**YOU NEED:**

- Role cards
- A large area, where participants can line up next to each other horizontally and have enough room to take at least 15 steps forward.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

1. Invite participants to stand in a horizontal line, side by side. Let them know that they will each receive a role card representing a different person's life situation. Emphasize that they should keep their roles private and not share them with others.
2. Distribute the role cards (see the handout.)
3. Ask participants to quietly step into their assigned roles. They can do this with their eyes closed or simply in silence. Play soft background music to create a reflective atmosphere, and slowly guide them through a series of life-mapping questions, such as: Where were you born? What did your house look like? What was your family like? Were there many children? Did you celebrate important moments with laughter and gifts? What did your parents do for a living? Were both of your parents present in your upbringing? What was your childhood like? Did you go to school? Did you finish your studies? Did you go to university? And how is your life right now? Where do you live? What is your monthly income? What are you afraid of? Where do you spend your holidays? What is good about your life?
4. Ask participants to open their eyes and explain the next part: you will read a series of statements. If they feel the statement applies to their assigned role, they should take one step forward. If it does not, they should remain in place.
5. Read the statements from the list on page 14. Pause after each one, giving participants enough time to take a step and observe their surroundings. Encourage silence and reflection throughout.
6. Once all the statements have been read, ask participants to stop and look around. Let them take in the positions of others and their own. Then invite everyone to sit together in a large circle to discuss the experience.

**FOR FACILITATORS:**

- Ensure you have a spacious area so participants can physically take steps. The visual impact of unequal movement helps make the experience more powerful.
- Consider adapting the roles to reflect the real-life context of your participants and their communities.
- If you want to guide the discussion toward stereotypes, you can ask participants the questions below. Encourage thoughtful reflection on how stereotypes affect behavior and how we can begin to challenge them.
  - Were your responses based on personal

experience or assumptions about your role?

- Where do these assumptions come from—media, education, family, or elsewhere?
- How do these influences shape our perceptions and potentially lead to bias or discrimination?

To continue working on our stereotypes you could use the "Euro-rail 'à la carte'" activity on page 22.

**REFLECTION:**

Guide the discussion around the following questions:

- How did you feel when you were able to step forward—or when you weren't?
- For those who moved ahead quickly, when did you first notice that others weren't moving at the same pace?
- Were there moments when it felt like your basic human rights were being ignored?
- How easy or difficult was it to embody your assigned role? How did you imagine what that person's life might be like?

After the discussion, reveal the roles each participant played. To symbolically step out

of the roles, consider a small activity—such as having everyone change places in the circle.

Then continue the conversation by drawing connections between the role-play and real-world experiences.

- In what ways does this activity reflect our society?
- Do the roles and access to rights in this activity mirror realities in your local community, region, or country?
- What initiatives or actions are being taken locally to address these issues?
- What more can be done to address inequalities in society in general?

# LIST OF STATEMENTS

- You have never encountered any serious financial difficulties.
- You have access to decent housing with a telephone and television.
- You feel your language, religion and culture are respected in the society where you live.
- You feel that your opinion on social and political issues matters, and that your views are listened to.
- Other people seek your advice on different issues.
- You are not afraid of being stopped by the police.
- You know where to turn for advice and help if you need it.
- You have never felt discriminated against because of your origin.
- You have adequate social and medical protection to meet your needs.
- You can go away on holiday once a year.
- You can invite friends for dinner at home.
- You have an interesting life and you are positive about your future.
- You feel you can study and follow the profession of your choice.
- You are not afraid of being harassed or attacked in the streets, or in the media.
- You can vote in national and local elections.
- You can celebrate the most important religious festivals with your family/relatives and close friends.
- You can participate in an international seminar abroad.
- You can go to the cinema or the theatre at least once a week.
- You are not afraid for the future of your children.
- You can buy new clothes at least once every three months.
- You can fall in love with the person of your choice.
- You feel that your competence is appreciated and respected in the society where you live.
- You can use and benefit from the internet.
- You are not afraid of the consequences of climate change.
- You are free to use any site on the internet without fear of censorship.

## HANDOUT: ROLES

It is important to adjust these roles to reflect the reality of the participants. If there are more participants, you could either create new roles, or distribute the same role to two people, and later compare their individual trajectories. Print and cut these role cards as you see fit.

You are a 17-year-old Roma girl who didn't finish primary school.	You are a fashion model of African origin.	You are a homeless young man, 27 years old.
You are the son of the American ambassador in your country.	You are a farmer in a remote area, in the mountains.	You are a single mother.
You are a young artist who is addicted to heroin.	You are a Ukrainian war refugee, living together with your 2 children.	You are a young university graduate.
You are a Chinese immigrant, owning a successful local food business	You are an undocumented immigrant from Pakistan.	You are a 70-year-old woman, retired.
You are an HIV positive, middle-aged prostitute.	You are the daughter of the president of the political party in power.	You are a disabled person, only able to move around in a wheelchair.
You are the daughter of a local bank manager, studying economics at the university.	You are an Arab girl, living with your parents who are devout Muslims.	You are a successful actor.
You are a 22-year-old lesbian.	You are an unemployed university graduate waiting for the first opportunity to work.	

## ACTIVITY 3:

# THE LAKE OF FROZEN COMPETENCES

*This activity engages participants to work together in «a mission of saving competences for democratic culture» that are connected to Roma inclusion. This process enables team building. Further, the activity helps participants to get acquainted with the 20 competences within the RFCDC. Finally, it opens the door for a more thorough analysis and evaluation of the way competences are being mobilized and deployed (or not) in democratic situations.*

**DURATION:** 60 minutes

**PARTICIPANTS:** The activity works best with a group of up to 25 participants. If the group is larger, the participants could be divided into two groups for a parallel exercise.

**YOU NEED:**

- A large space without furniture
- Scotch tape or masking tape
- The 20 competences printed on A5 paper
- The titles of competences components printed on colored A4 paper (values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and critical understanding)
- A few A4 colored papers

### IMPLEMENTATION:

1. Before the activity, prepare the room for the exercise by creating a big circle on the floor out of scotch tape (this represents “the lake”). Then place all printed competences inside the lake (these are the “frozen competences”). Add some colored A4 papers inside the circle (these are “islands” participants can step on). On four separate walls, hang A4 sheets labeled with the titles of the four competence categories.
2. Inform participants that all 20 competences for democratic culture have been frozen in the lake. Their mission is to rescue the competences that are most relevant to **Roma inclusion in schools**. They must work as a group to identify the competences that, according to their unanimous decision, should be collected from the lake.
3. Participants can enter the lake one by one through the entrance side (marked with an arrow). Participants may only step on the colored papers representing islands. If they fall into the lake, they get frozen (a “beep” from a facilitator) and stay frozen for three minutes (a touch from facilitator to unfreeze).
4. Once the competences have been rescued, the group has to identify which category each competence belongs to, and stick them on the wall under its respective title. If a competence is placed under the wrong category, the facilitator will remove it and return it to the frozen lake once more.
5. Give the group 10 minutes to agree on a strategy. Then, give the signal to start and allow 25 minutes to complete the task. Observe the group dynamics, enforce the rules, and manage the time.



**REFLECTION:**

Facilitate a group discussion with the following questions:

**General Reflection**

- How did everyone feel during the activity?
- What parts did you enjoy most? What was challenging?
- Did your group follow a clear strategy?
- If you could do the activity again, would you change your approach?

**Connecting to the Competences for Democratic Culture**

- What do these competences mean in the context of being a democratic citizen?

- Can we call ourselves democratic and inter-culturally competent if we can only apply a few of these competences?
- If your group had failed to rescue all the competences, would the remaining ones have been enough to ensure Roma inclusion?
- In real life, what does the frozen lake symbolize? Who are the rescuers in our society?
- What can we do in our daily lives to help others acquire competences for democratic culture and inclusion?

**FOR FACILITATORS:**

This activity could serve to delve deeper into the analysis and evaluation of competences and participants could be asked to look more closely at descriptors associated with these competences (see the RFCDC, Volume 2).



# TOPIC 2

## STEREOTYPES & PREJUDICES

Stereotypes and prejudices are attitudes that can lead to exclusion, discrimination, and violence. Addressing them is essential in creating a safe and respectful learning environment where diversity is embraced rather than feared.

The following activities provide a hands-on approach to recognizing, questioning, and deconstructing biased assumptions. They encourage critical thinking, self-reflection, and open dialogue—empowering participants to promote equity and mutual respect.

The activities address the following competences:

- Openness to cultural otherness and to different beliefs, worldviews, and practices
- Tolerance of ambiguity
- Analytical and critical thinking skills
- Self-efficacy - taking action against discrimination

#### **TIPS FOR FACILITATORS TO COMBAT STEREOTYPES AND PROMOTING MORE INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS:**

- Be mindful of the language we use
- Become aware of our own stereotypes
- Use inclusive language, for example “those of us who are Roma, those of us who have blue eyes, etc”
- Work with pupils to engage critically with texts and discourses
- Focus on similarities rather than differences
- Encourage self-affirmation and self-esteem of people who are stereotyped
- Create and engage in dialogue
- If there are Roma children in the class, discussions about stereotypes and prejudices need to be handled with great care to avoid reinforcing existing biases or making them feel singled out or victimized further



**Read more on the Council of Europe Model of Competences -  
Reference Framework of Competences for a Democratic Culture (RFCDC)**

# ACTIVITY 1:

## ODD ONE OUT

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*This exercise helps us start a discussion about prejudices, discrimination and exclusion. Ultimately, it facilitates group reflections about majority and minority dynamics in society.*

**DURATION:** 30 minutes

**PARTICIPANTS:** All are welcome

**YOU NEED:**

- Small sticky labels or pieces of paper in different colors. For example, for a group of 16 participants, prepare:
  - 4 red spots
  - 4 blue spots
  - 4 green spots
  - 4 yellow spots
  - 1 odd color (e.g., orange) to stand out

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### IMPLEMENTATION:

1. Without letting participants see the colors, stick one colored spot on each person's forehead. Each participant should not know what color spot they're wearing.
2. Ask participants to form groups with others who have the same color spot.
3. Nobody is allowed to talk, but they may use non-verbal communication.
4. Stop the activity when everybody seems to have settled into a group and invite participants to discuss this experience.

### FOR FACILITATORS:

- Be mindful of who receives the odd-colored spot — this role can carry emotional weight.
- For older or more advanced groups, increase the complexity by using shapes in addition to colors (e.g., red circles, green triangles, etc.). This will add multiple layers to the grouping criteria and deepen the reflection on identity and inclusion.



### REFLECTION:

- How did you figure out how to group yourselves?
- Did you understand what the grouping criteria were?
- How did you realize who belonged in your group—and who didn't?
- How did it feel to successfully join a group?
- If you were the person with the orange spot (the unique one), how did that feel?
- Did anyone try to help others find their group? Did anyone try to include the person who didn't fit anywhere?
- What different groups do you belong to in everyday life (e.g., school, sports, music, faith community)?
- Are those groups open to everyone? Why or why not?
- In our society, who are the ones often left out or excluded?
- What types of discrimination or exclusion does the Roma community face?
- *For school settings: What is being done in your school to make it a welcoming place where everyone feels like they belong?*

## ACTIVITY 2:

# EURO-RAIL À LA CARTE

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*Roma people are often facing negative labelling and daily discrimination. Most people don't consciously choose to discriminate—but stereotypes can unconsciously shape our perceptions and decisions. This activity offers a powerful way to explore how these biases operate in everyday situations, like choosing travel companions for a long train journey.*

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**DURATION:** 90 minutes

**PARTICIPANTS:** 3+ (maximum 30)

**YOU NEED:**

- Printed list of passengers (one per person or per group)

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### IMPLEMENTATION:

1. Divide participants into groups of 3-5.
2. Invite participants to listen to this story:

*"You are about to board a train for a 4-day journey from Faro to Trondheim. You'll be staying in a sleeper car shared with three other passengers. You get to choose who they are. Take a look at the list of fellow travelers. Who would you feel most comfortable sharing your compartment with? And who would you prefer not to travel with? Choose wisely—it's going to be a long journey."*

3. Distribute the list of passengers (page 24) and ask the participants to individually select three people they would most like to travel with and three people they would least like to travel with.
4. Once they have made their choices, ask them to share in their group their choices and the reason behind. Let participants negotiate and come up with a common list of people they would like most and least to travel with.
5. Invite each group to share their lists with the whole group.

**FOR FACILITATORS:**

- If the group is very small, participants can work individually instead of in teams.
- Be mindful of time: the longer the passenger list, the more time participants will need to reflect, discuss, and share.
- Tailor the list of characters to reflect common stereotypes present in your participants' local or cultural context.

**Keep in mind:**

It is true that the description of the passengers in the exercise is very limited, it is just a "label", and we don't know much about their personality or personal story. But isn't it true that we react in the same way when we watch TV or pass by people in the street?

This activity is not about pointing fingers or identifying who has the most stereotypes. It's about raising awareness that we all have them—and that the key is recognizing and working through them.

Challenging our own stereotypes in this case means learning to avoid snap judgments about lifestyles or cultures different from our own and staying open to perspectives and life situations we may not fully understand.

**REFLECTION:**

- How easy or difficult was it to choose? Why?
- Look at the choices and discuss them – what influenced your choices?

Many of the choices will be based on stereotypes (e.g. assuming that small children will always misbehave, that somebody with a particular skill will offer us music/embroidery craft lessons for free in train, or that people with an illness will automatically be contagious etc). Discuss with the participants:

- What assumptions or expectations were made about certain passengers?
- Which stereotypes came up in the discussions?
- Where do these stereotypes come from (media, upbringing, experiences)?

Link the activity with reality and ask participants

- Have you ever experienced a situation while traveling, where you have felt uncomfortable with fellow travellers or enjoyed their company?
- How would it feel if someone avoided sitting near you based on how you look, dress, or speak?

# HANDOUT: EURO-RAIL À LA CARTE - THE SCENARIO

Imagine you are boarding the “Deer Valley Express” train for a week-long ride from Faro to Trondheim. You are travelling in a couchette compartment, shared with three other people.

Which of the following passengers would you prefer to share your compartment with?

1. A Serbian Soldier from Bosnia.
2. An overweight Swiss financial broker.
3. An Italian DJ who seems to have plenty of dollars.
4. An African woman selling leather products.
5. A young artist who is HIV positive.
6. A Roma man from Hungary.
7. A Basque nationalist who travels regularly to Russia.
8. A German rapper living an alternative lifestyle.
9. A blind accordion player from Austria.
10. A Ukrainian student who doesn't want to go home.
11. A middle-aged Romanian woman who has no visa and is holding a 1-year-old child in her arms.
12. A Dutch hard-liner feminist.
13. A skinhead from Sweden who is under the influence of alcohol.
14. A wrestler from Belfast apparently going to a football match.
15. A Polish sex worker from Berlin.
16. A French farmer who speaks only French and has a basket full of strong cheese.
17. A Kurdish refugee living in Germany who is on his way back from Libya.



## ACTIVITY 3:

# FOREIGN CHILD

*This activity helps participants gain a deeper understanding of the European Convention on Human Rights by linking its articles to real-life abuses commonly experienced by Roma and raise awareness about their rights.*

**DURATION:** 90 minutes

**PARTICIPANTS:** 12-30

**YOU NEED:**

- One copy of the handout “Foreign child” for each small group
- Copies of the short version of the European Convention on Human Rights<sup>2</sup> for each small group

### IMPLEMENTATION:

1. Read aloud the story “Foreign child” (see handout below) and ask participants to reflect on and discuss which ethnic group the child might belong to.
2. Gather initial reactions from participants regarding the story – whether they find it realistic, whether similar situations occur in their country, and whether they think it is „acceptable“.
3. Explain that many Roma community members frequently face similar situations, and that such treatment is illegal. If possible, provide relevant statistics and real-life examples.
4. Introduce the European Convention of Human Rights. Distribute the simplified copies of its articles and let participants familiarize themselves with it.
5. Distribute the copies of the “Foreign child” story and ask participants to link various aspects of the story to specific articles of the Convention.
6. Let the participants present their findings. Discuss their answers, then proceed with debriefing. You may use the Solution grid provided at the end of this activity as a handout.

### REFLECTION:

- Have you ever experienced or witnessed anything that is related to this story?
- By working with the European Convention on Human Rights, we could see that many aspects in this story constitute human rights violations and are illegal – yet they still happen. Why is it important to have laws that define what is unacceptable in the society?
- Can you think of unfair treatment? Would these be considered human rights violations?
- Do you know other groups besides Roma, who frequently experience discrimination?
- Are you aware of any organizations that work to combat these issues in society?
- In what ways can you stand up against injustice?

### FOR FACILITATORS:

- Make sure to conclude the debriefing by discussing concrete actions that can be taken to combat discrimination, human rights violations, and abuse. It is important for participants to leave with the understanding that such abuses must not be tolerated and that everyone has a role to play in fostering an inclusive society.
- This is an advanced activity, and if participants are not yet familiar with human rights, consider using an introductory exercise from the Council of Europe's *Compass manual for Human Rights Education with Young People* prior to or instead of this exercise.<sup>4</sup>

## HANDOUT: FOREIGN CHILD

### *Foreign child*

*I'm told I am a foreigner, although I was born here, and so were my parents. At school, I've been placed in a special class for "foreign" children – so have my brothers and sisters. We're not allowed to be in "normal" classes. We all get bullied by the other children because we're considered "different". The teachers don't do anything about it. Some teachers even pick on us. They never face consequences.*

*People don't want us around. They don't even know us; they just shout at us or beat us up because of who we are – or who they think we are. Well, we're children, just like them. And how are we meant to behave if someone shouts at us or beats us up? Should we like them for it?*

*If we go to the police, they often don't listen. They tell us it must have been our fault because they believe we're all troublemakers. How do they know? I thought the courts were meant to decide that. The police stop us in the streets all the time for no reason. They tell us they think we've stolen something, and they need to search us. Sometimes I get stopped six times a day, but I have never stolen anything.*

*I've heard of people like me who've been in prison and have been mistreated by prison officers. Why should someone who beats up someone else not be punished? Even prison officers are meant to follow the law.*

*Members of the government often insult us, as if everyone from my community is the same and everyone is a criminal. Well, we're not. Every community has some people who commit crimes. The government doesn't insult 'everyone' from another community, just because a few of them commit crimes. Why don't they ever tell the good stories? Or the ordinary stories? Our everyday stories are good, just like theirs are.*

*On the TV and on the Internet, people say whatever they want about us. I'm tired of seeing Facebook groups telling us we're dirty or stupid, or much worse things. They tell us we should get out of the country, go home, get a job like everyone else. My dad would love to have a job. No-one will employ him because he's a "gypsy".*

*How are we supposed to live? How are we meant to feel when everyone says nasty things about us, even when they don't know us? It's hard: sometimes I don't want to go out into the street because I'm afraid I might get shouted at or beaten up.*

# HANDOUT: FOREIGN CHILD SOLUTION GRID

All examples are likely to engage the right to **be free from discrimination (Article 14 or Protocol 12)**. Other rights which may be engaged:

<b>Special classes or schools for Roma children</b>	<i>Protocol 1, Article 2</i>
<b>Teachers picking on children</b>	<i>Article 8 (Private life). If the abuse is very bad, may be Article 3. If it is affecting their education, maybe also engage Protocol 1, Article 2.</i>
<b>Teachers not being 'punished'</b>	<i>If no-one is taking complaints seriously, maybe Article 8 (or Article 3, if the abuse is very bad). Possibly Protocol 1, Article 2.</i>
<b>People 'shouting at' Roma</b>	<i>Article 8 if the abuse is bad, is happening regularly, and if the police are doing nothing about it.</i>
<b>People beating them up</b>	<i>Article 8 if the police are not responding to complaints. If the beating up is very bad or happening regularly, maybe Article 3.</i>
<b>The police not listening to complaints</b>	<i>Article 8 or 3, depending on how bad the complaint is. If there are any threats to people's life, maybe Article 2.</i>
<b>The police stopping and searching Roma</b>	<i>Article 5 (Liberty) if people are being stopped very regularly for no good reason. Also Article 8 (Private life).</i>
<b>Prison officers beating up Roma</b>	<i>Article 3 if the beating up is very bad. Also Article 8.</i>
<b>Prison officers not being 'punished'</b>	<i>Article 3 if the beating up is very bad. Also Article 8.</i>
<b>Members of the government abusing Roma</b>	<i>Article 8 if the abuse is very bad and is affecting how others treat Roma people.</i>
<b>Abuse on the Internet / in the media</b>	<i>This may not be a strict violation of human rights because it's not a public official who is responsible. The abuse would have to be very bad, and there would need to be formal complaints which have been ignored by public officials.</i>
<b>Not being able to get a job "because you're Roma"</b>	<i>Article 8 – particularly if any governmental organisations are refusing to employ someone because they are Roma.</i>
<b>Being afraid to go out into the streets</b>	<i>If there is a real threat for Roma children on the streets and the police are doing nothing about it, this may engage Article 8 or 3 (or 2).</i>



Read more on the Council of Europe Model  
of Competences - Reference Framework of  
Competences for a Democratic Culture (RFCDC)

## TOPIC 3

# ROMA CULTURE & HISTORY

Roma people have a rich and diverse cultural heritage and a long history that is too often ignored, misrepresented, or marginalized in mainstream narratives. Understanding Roma culture and history is a vital step toward recognition, dignity, and equity.

The following activities provide opportunities to learn about the rich and diverse history, culture, and heritage of the Roma communities, offering a deeper understanding of their traditions, struggles, and contributions to art, music, and social movements. They offer engaging and respectful ways of exploring Roma contributions to European culture and history, while also addressing historical injustices. Through these activities participants will gain a more inclusive perspective, fostering a sense of shared responsibility in building societies that are more equitable, tolerant, and respectful of all.

These activities address several key competences, including:

- Knowledge and critical understanding of culture, history, and heritage: exploring historical events, struggles against discrimination, and cultural richness that have shaped Roma communities.
- Valuing cultural diversity: gaining understanding and developing appreciation for the richness of diverse cultural expressions.
- Tolerance of ambiguity: recognizing complexity and understanding that cultural identity is multifaceted.
- Knowledge and critical understanding of the world: linking insights about Roma culture to broader global issues, such as human rights, social justice, and the fight against discrimination.

# ACTIVITY 1:

## ROMA BINGO

---

*This interactive quiz is designed to build awareness and understanding of Roma history, culture, and contributions through a fun and collaborative activity. By working in small groups, participants can explore and learn together in a supportive and inclusive setting.*

**DURATION:** 60 minutes (minimum)

**PARTICIPANTS:** 3 to maximum 30 participants (working in small groups of 3-6 people)

**YOU NEED:**

- One printed Bingo-style grid per small group (3–6 people).
  - Each grid should be printed on A4 paper and laid out with 4 columns and 4 rows.
  - Number each box as shown in the example provided.
  - Insert one question per box, leaving space for participants to write their answers.

---

**IMPLEMENTATION:**

1. Tell participants that they will be taking part in a quiz designed to encourage learning and reflection about the Roma people. Divide them into teams of about 3-6 participants.
2. Distribute the bingo grid to each group.
3. Explain that the activity is a twist on the classic Bingo game. If some participants are unfamiliar with Bingo, briefly describe the basic concept. Then, go through the adapted rules (see below) and make sure everyone understands how the game works.
4. Facilitate the quiz using the Bingo rules and quiz questions provided.
5. Once the game ends, review the correct answers—especially those that weren’t discussed during gameplay. Then, bring everyone together for a short **group reflection**.

**REFLECTION:**

After the game, invite participants to reflect using the following questions:

- Were you surprised by anything you learned about the Roma people?
- Which questions did you find most challenging, and why?
- Did any questions prompt different opinions in your group?
- How did you come to a shared answer or understanding?
- Were any of the correct answers unexpected? Why?
- Do you think the information shared during this activity is important? Why or why not?

**BINGO RULES**

This version of Bingo uses quiz questions to win. A team wins a round by correctly answering all the questions in a **single row or column** of their Bingo grid.

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16

**HOW IT WORKS**

- The facilitator reads out questions one by one.
- After each question, teams have a brief moment to discuss and agree on their answer. Encourage quiet discussions to avoid other groups overhearing.
- Teams write their agreed answer in the corresponding box.
- If the team cannot reach consensus, they should vote quickly to decide.
- When a team believes they've answered all the questions in a row or column correctly, they shout "BINGO!". The game pauses to check their answers.
- If all answers in that row or column are correct, the team wins 100 points.
- If any answers are incorrect, the team loses 100 points.
- The game continues after a BINGO call, with remaining questions read out and all teams still participating—regardless of previous BINGO attempts.
- Teams may call "BINGO!" as many times as they want.

**FOR FACILITATORS:**

- Consider exploring questions that many groups got wrong. Discuss where their information came from and what might have led to the misconceptions.
- Use this as a springboard for further activities focused on more specific themes.
- Alternative formats can be to let participants work individually, or to turn the quiz into a research activity, allowing individuals or teams to investigate and find answers at their own pace.

## QUIZ – QUESTIONS

1. When did the Roma first arrive in Europe, and from where?
2. What is the language spoken by the Roma people?
3. Give an example of historical discrimination against the Roma in your country or in Europe?
4. Name a famous Roma individual.
5. Name a piece of art, music, literature, or another cultural achievement by a Roma artist.
6. Give an example of current discrimination against the Roma in your country or in Europe?
7. How many Roma people live in your country?
8. When is International Roma Day celebrated?
9. Name an organization that works for Roma rights.
10. Give an example of a successful fight for Roma rights.
11. How many Roma people live in Europe?
12. What is the significance of the Roma flag?
13. How many Roma people are estimated to have died in the Holocaust (total in Europe)?
14. Why is it important to distinguish between the terms "Gypsy"/"Zigeuner" and "Roma"?
15. Name two countries (besides Germany) where local officials participated in the genocide of the Roma.
16. (TRICK QUESTION) Which of the following is the most reliable way to determine if someone is Roma? Is it their name/surname, their genetic makeup, their lifestyle or their likes and dislikes?



## QUIZ – ANSWERS

1. The Roma are believed to have arrived in Europe around the 12th century. Reliable evidence of Roma settlement in Europe dates back to about 1400. Accept answers from approximately 1100 to 1400.
  2. The Roma speak Romani, a language with several regional dialects.
  3. Numerous answers are possible, such as: slavery in Romania, forced sterilisation in Slovakia (and elsewhere), the Great “Gypsy” Roundup in Spain, expulsions, removal of children, lynch mobs or official “cleansing” operations, prohibited marriages, arbitrary detention or arrest – in almost every European country from the 14th century onwards (and in some cases, continuing to the present day). The numerous violations during the Holocaust could also be mentioned.
  4. Numerous answers possible, for example: Joaquín Cortés, Romani Rose, Nicolae Gheorghe, Ceija Stojka, Bronisława Wajs (Papusza), Charlie Chaplin.
  5. Numerous answers are possible, such as “songs by Django Reinhardt,” “dance performance by Joaquin Cortes,” “films with Bob Hoskins,”.
  6. Numerous examples possible, e.g. in health, education, employment, treatment by police or law enforcement officials, housing, etc. Try to ask participants to detail the discrimination rather than just offering a broad heading (such as ‘health’).
  7. You can accept a certain margin of approximation, for example by 50.000.
  8. April 8. It is a day to celebrate Roma culture and raise awareness of the challenges that Roma people continue to face, including discrimination and marginalization.
  9. Numerous answers possible. At European level, examples include the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC), European Roma Information Office, European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERIAN), Roma Foundation for Europe. Also accept organisations working generally on human rights, such as the Council of Europe, Amnesty International, European Network Against Racism, Minority Rights Group International, etc. For some local Roma organisations, see the database by the European Roma Rights Centre:
- 
10. Numerous answers possible. For examples: the campaign for recognition of the Roma Genocide and cases at the European Court of Human Rights (for example, against sterilisation of Roma women and segregated education). You may also have local examples such as a campaign to prevent an eviction, or to remove discrimination in the workplace.
  11. Approximately 6 million in the European Union; approximately 11 million in Council of Europe member states. Allow for a margin of 1 million for any estimates.
  12. The Roma flag symbolizes Roma identity and unity. The blue represents the sky, the green symbolizes the earth, and the red 16-spoked wheel reflects Indian origins and the nomadic journey. Adopted in 1971, it stands for pride, resilience, and the ongoing fight for recognition and equal rights.
  13. The lowest estimates are about half a million people. The highest estimates are three times that, one million and a half. Accept as correct anything within this range.
  14. “Gypsy” and “Zigeuner” we should never use! These words are considered derogatory terms by many Roma people, as they have historically been used to perpetuate harmful stereotypes and discrimination. “Roma” is the preferred term because it reflects their self-identification and is more respectful.
  15. Almost every country which was occupied by Germany or allied with the Nazis participated in the Genocide, for example Poland, Hungary, Croatia, Romania, Austria, etc.
  16. The correct answer is that none of the named characteristics are reliable “tests”. The only really reliable test is whether someone self-identifies as Roma. There are no common physical characteristics – even at the genetic level – which are shared by all Roma and only Roma. The same goes for ‘likes and dislikes and ‘lifestyle’. Although a Roma family name may indicate that one of an individual’s ancestors was Roma sometime in the past, whether or not this individual is Roma is much more dependent on whether they consider themselves to be so. Similarly, someone with a ‘non-Roma’ surname may easily consider themselves to be Roma.

## ACTIVITY 2:

# IDENTITY FLOWER

*This activity explores the complexity and dynamic nature of identity. It encourages participants to reflect on what defines one's identity and how it is defined in relation to others. The goal is to share aspects of personal identity, recognize both shared experiences and differences, and foster a deeper understanding of one another.*

**DURATION:** 60 minutes

**PARTICIPANTS:** all are welcome

**YOU NEED:**

- Paper and colored pencils for all participants.

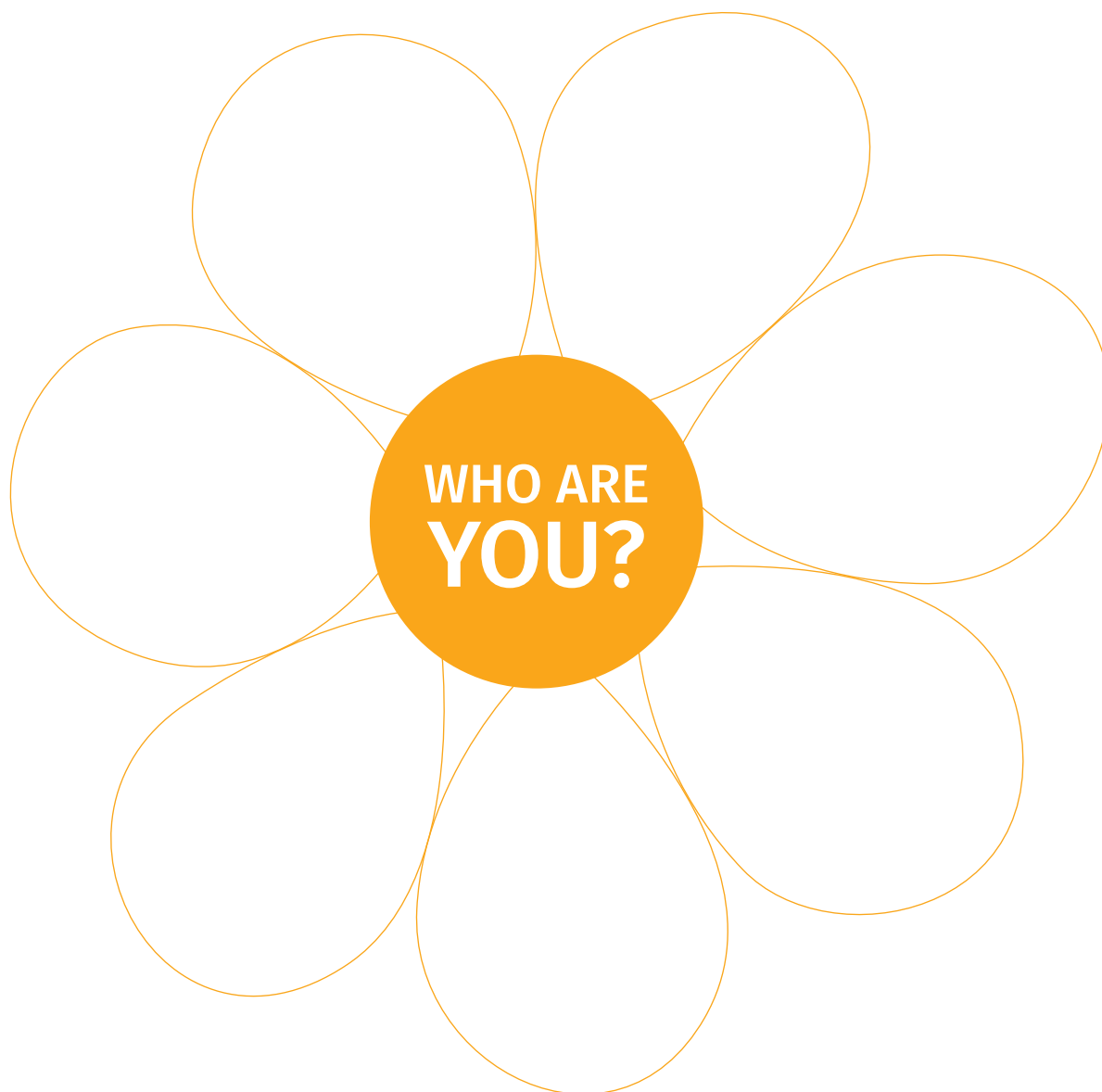
### IMPLEMENTATION:

1. Begin by defining the concept of identity with the participants. Explain that identity is not fixed but rather a fluid and evolving construct. You will ask them to reflect on the different elements that shape who they are.
2. Divide participants into smaller groups of 4-6 people. Give each participant a sheet of paper and colored pencils, and provide one large sheet (for the group) with a simple flower outline.
3. Ask each participant to draw a flower on their sheet of paper. The flower should have petals, each representing an element that defines their identity. Encourage participants to interpret "elements" in their own way—these could include roles (e.g., sibling, parent, friend), values, hobbies, experiences, or any other aspect that shapes who they are.
4. After everyone has completed their flowers, invite participants to share their drawings within their small groups. Together, they should identify one common element defining this group. The common element does not have to be taken from the individual flowers, it could be a new element created by the group together. Write this shared element on the large petal provided to the group.
5. Once each group has completed their big petal, bring all the groups together and let each group to present their identity flower

### FOR FACILITATORS:

The activity could be linked to discussions on stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination for example through the Pyramid of Hate (see page 57.)

## HANDOUT: IDENTITY FLOWER



### REFLECTION:

- How did participants proceed to choose the elements of their individual flower? How easy/difficult was it?
- In the subgroups, how was the process for identifying the common petal?
- What did participants appreciate about the other flowers?
- What did they learn about others? And about themselves?
- Who defines a person's identity? What is the role of the other people in this process?
- What can be said about identity based on this activity? Is identity a fixed concept?
- What is the relationship between identity and culture?
- In reality, are the different elements of identity separate (on different petals) or interlinked? If they are interlinked, how do they influence each other?

## ACTIVITY 3:

# FIGHTERS FOR ROMA RIGHTS

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*This activity is designed to reinforce positive images of the Roma and to break down stereotypes. The participants will be introduced to well-known Roma personalities and be encouraged to reflect on the qualities they value in a role model.*

**DURATION:** 90 minutes

**PARTICIPANTS:** maximum 30

**YOU NEED:**

- rojector or flipchart paper
- Handout: Cards Roma personalities
- Optional: access to the Internet

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### PREPARATION:

- Print copies of the task sheet and the handout. You will need one task sheet and one set of cards for each small group (4–5 people).
- Cut out the cards.
- Make one 'blank card' for each person in the group. This can simply be another sheet of A4 paper.

---

### IMPLEMENTATION:

1. Ask participants to think about things they believe – or have heard – about the Roma. They could make a brief list on a piece of paper, but you should tell them that no one needs to see what they have written down! Encourage both positive and negative characterizations.
2. After a few minutes, ask if anyone wants to share their notes. Go through some of the suggestions without saying whether they are 'right' or 'wrong'. Then explain that generalisations about groups of people are known as stereotypes. "All Roma love music" is a stereotype; so is "all Roma are criminals".
3. Tell participants that in the activity, they will look at a few people who have made a difference in the world and are widely respected.
4. Hand out copies of the task sheet and check that the instructions are clear. Explain that groups will need to spend about 30 minutes on part 1 and 20 minutes on part 2. Tell them that they will receive the "blank cards" after 30 minutes.
5. Divide participants into groups of about 4–6 people. Give each group a copy of the task sheet and a set of cards and enough colored pens and "blank cards" for everyone in their group. Remind them that the first task is to familiarise themselves with the cards and discuss the personalities.

Tell them that this is a very small sample from a very large pool!

6. After about 30 minutes, check the progress of groups and hand out the sheets of blank paper that they will use to create their own role models. Remind participants that a role model does not need to be someone famous. The final choice about who goes on the “blank cards” should be a personal one.
7. When groups have finished, ask them to display or present the cards they have created. Then bring everyone together for a group reflection

### REFLECTION:

#### Questions about “famous Roma”:

- What did you think about the selection of people on the cards? Were you impressed by the personalities?
- Had you heard of all these people? Had you heard of any of them?! Do you think most people in your country would have heard of any of these people, or could they name other famous Roma personalities? Why or why not?
- How easy was it for you to think of new people to put on the cards?
- Why do you think impressive, and famous, Roma personalities are not widely known?
- Would you change anything on your list of ‘things I believe about the Roma’?
- Has the activity made you rethink anything in your attitudes towards Roma people, or towards yourself?
- Would you change anything in your behaviour as a result of the activity?

#### Questions about participants’ role models

#### Questions on attitudes and Roma stereotypes:

- Reflect on the list of generalizations you wrote at the start of the activity. Were any of these assumptions challenged by the role models you discussed today?
- Do you think the role models you looked at fit with the stereotypes you might have had about Roma people?
- Which personalities were you most impressed by? Why?
- What was most important for you when you created your own role model? Why?
- Was it important that someone was “famous”? Why or why not?
- Why do some impressive people become famous, and why do many impressive people not become famous? What does “being famous” really tell us about a person?

### FOR FACILITATORS:

- As a follow-up to this activity, encourage participants to research famous Roma people, such as: Joaquín Cortés, Romani Rose, Nicolae Gheorghe, Ceija Stojka, Bronisława Wajs (Papusza), Charlie Chaplin or other well-known Roma, particularly from their own country.
- You could organise an exhibition to raise awareness of the different contributions Roma people have made around the world.
- **KEEP IN MIND:** Stereotypes can be useful as a guide, but they are often based on a lack of information or on preconceptions that we already have in our minds. Stereotypes are very rarely true about everyone in a particular group. If we use stereotypes to influence decisions about everyone in the group, or to influence our own behavior or attitudes, it is unfair to the individual. Think about if someone said, “all young people are lazy so you must be lazy!”

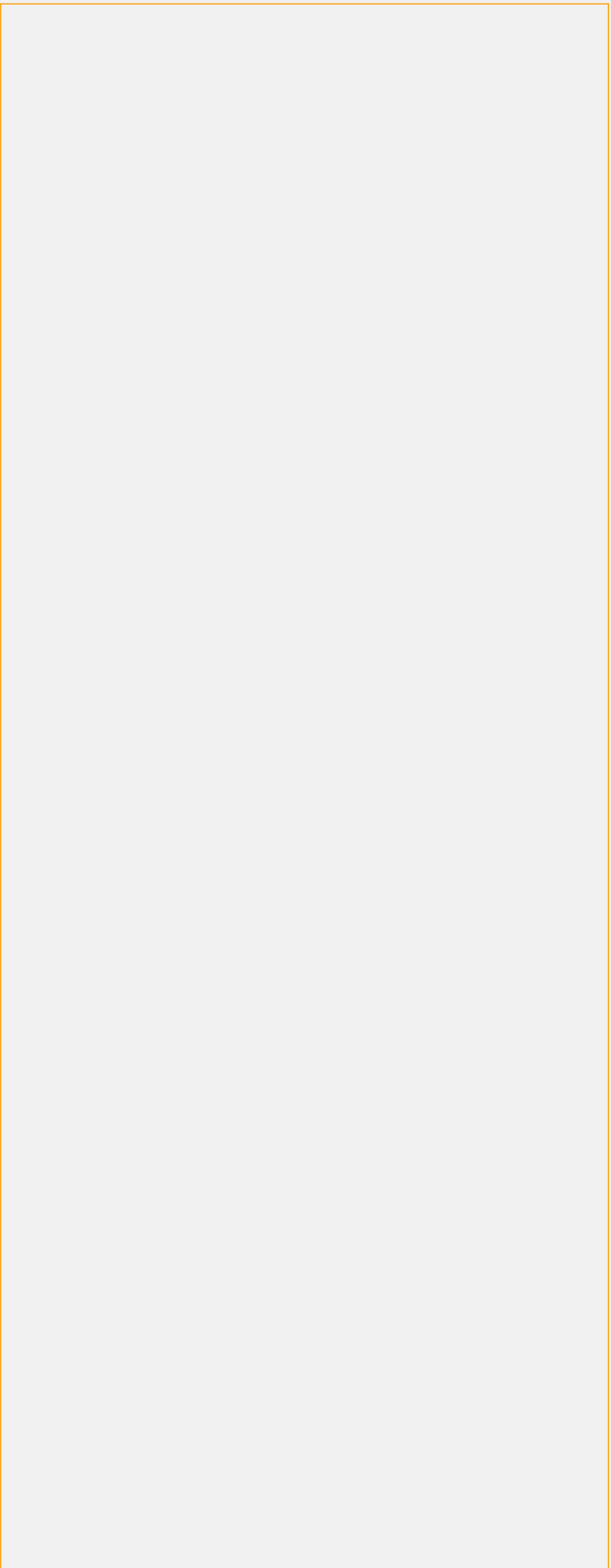
# HANDOUT: TASK SHEET AND CARDS ON ROMA PERSONALITIES

## PART 1:

1. Distribute the cards among the members of your group. It does not matter if someone has more than one card, but make sure everyone has at least one.
2. Everyone in the group should look at their own card and then present it to the group.
3. Discuss the personalities and see if you have a “favourite”. Which of the personalities would you most want to be like?

## PART 2:

4. Use the “blank cards” to add your own Roma role models. These may be famous Roma people, but it may also be friends or members of your family that you respect.
5. Write a list of possible candidates in your group.
6. Everyone in the group should choose one person from the list drawn up in step 4. This can be a personal choice!
7. Draw a picture of the person and give a short description to explain why they are on the card. You could also add a quote in the style of the person!



### ROMANI ROSE

*"My goal has always been to wipe out racism and discrimination which many individual members of our minority have experienced. I identify personally with their humiliation."*

Romani Rose is one of the leading international figures in the field of Roma rights. He was born in Germany and began campaigning for public recognition of the Roma Genocide when he was still a teenager. In his own family, 13 members had been murdered, including his uncle and grandfather, but the German government (and other governments) would not admit that the Roma were targeted on grounds of "race" during the Holocaust.

At the age of 30, Romani took part in a week-long hunger strike at the Dachau camp memorial. The publicity attracted by the hunger strike forced the German Chancellor at last to acknowledge that a Genocide had been carried out against the Roma. Now Romani Rose is Chairman of the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma and a member of the executive committee of the International Movement against Discrimination and Racism.

### CEIJA STOJKA

*"If the world does not change now ... if it does not build peace – true peace – so that my great-grandchildren have a chance to live in this world, then I cannot explain why I survived Auschwitz, Bergen-Belsen, and Ravensbruck."*

Ceija Stojka was born in Austria and became a famous painter, writer and musician. She survived three death camps during the Roma Genocide and was just 12 years old when she was released from Bergen-Belsen. Up to 200 members of her family circle were not so lucky: they were all murdered during the Genocide.

Ceija began by selling carpets to make a living. Only much later in life did she start painting. She painted images of the Holocaust so that others would know about the terrible experiences she and others had suffered. And she painted images of a happy life before the war, travelling and living according to ancient customs.

*"I always try to portray my feelings and memories. I want to show my own world to the people. It is important to understand that we are all human beings and art allows us to live and exist. Art can demonstrate and connect us."*

## RITA IZSÁK

*"When I was a student ... I was suddenly fired for no reason ... I got angry, and joined the European Roma Rights Centre. I became a Roma rights activist. I was faced with this terrible truth, and it made me a fighter."*

Rita Izsák grew up in Hungary. Her early experiences shaped her determination to take pride in her Roma identity and to fight for Roma rights.

Rita was branded a "Gypsy" while at school and she found out early on that her father had been warned by work colleagues not to take a Roma wife. Later on, Rita was dismissed from her work because she was Roma.

She went on to get a law degree and a Masters degree, to learn several foreign languages, and to work for various organisations fighting for Roma rights.

Now Rita works at the Office of the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights as the UN's Independent Expert on Minority Issues. She carries out monitoring of human rights issues affecting minorities across the world, bringing them to public attention and to the attention of the Human Rights Council.

## NICOLAE GHEORGHE

*"I was taught to be Romanian. I rediscovered my identity ... I want to die as a human person."*

As a child growing up in Romania, Nicolae Gheorghe was encouraged to forget his Roma roots. But after graduating in philosophy and sociology – where he was top of his class – he felt the need to work on Roma issues. He became a widely respected leader and defender of Roma rights.

During the communist era, Gheorghe was investigated by the Security Services, particularly after he wrote an article for Radio Liberty on the problems facing the Roma population in Romania. Later on, he organised a campaign against the Romanian government to adopt the use of the term Roma rather than 'tsigan' (gypsy). The campaign was successful and he soon became an expert on minorities for the government as well as an advisor on Roma and Sinti issues for the OSCE.

Gheorghe founded one of the leading Roma rights organisations in Romania, and later in Europe. One of his aims was to encourage Roma to organise into civic organisations and work to promote and protect their own rights.



## VALDEMAR KALININ IVA BITTOVÁ

*"Strong winds are rattling my window panes  
It's pouring down the ladle  
But what weather reigns in my native plains?  
Tell me, wind, if you are able.  
White snow falls on Belarus, he answers,  
The Roma, speaking Romani tongue,  
Visit festivals on their horses.  
- Then our forests are basking in sun."*

Valdemar Kalinin was born in Belarus in the former Soviet Union and worked for many years as a teacher. Today he is a wellknown poet and writer and has written more than 36 books, poems and articles about the Roma. In 2001, he completed a translation of the Bible into Romanes.

Kalinin now lives in England. He is a member of the World Roma Organization Rromanipen and Chairman of the UK Gypsy Council. He has won international awards including prizes for peace and cultural development.

*"No monument stands,  
Except in the minds of the old,  
Woods and land bore witness,  
This older man declares:  
Roma are buried here, don't disturb this land!"*  
(From the poem 'It's going to rain')

## IVA BITTOVÁ

*"I never agreed with people who told me I had to do something in a certain way. This is what I do and this is my life. I'm interested in the simple things. I believe if people are unhappy about something, they have to say something, or they cannot change anything. I know life is not easy and has many faces. We have to observe and understand our differences."*

Iva Bittová is an internationally renowned violinist, singer and composer. She was born in the former Republic of Czechoslovakia and began life as an actress. She has appeared in several feature films.

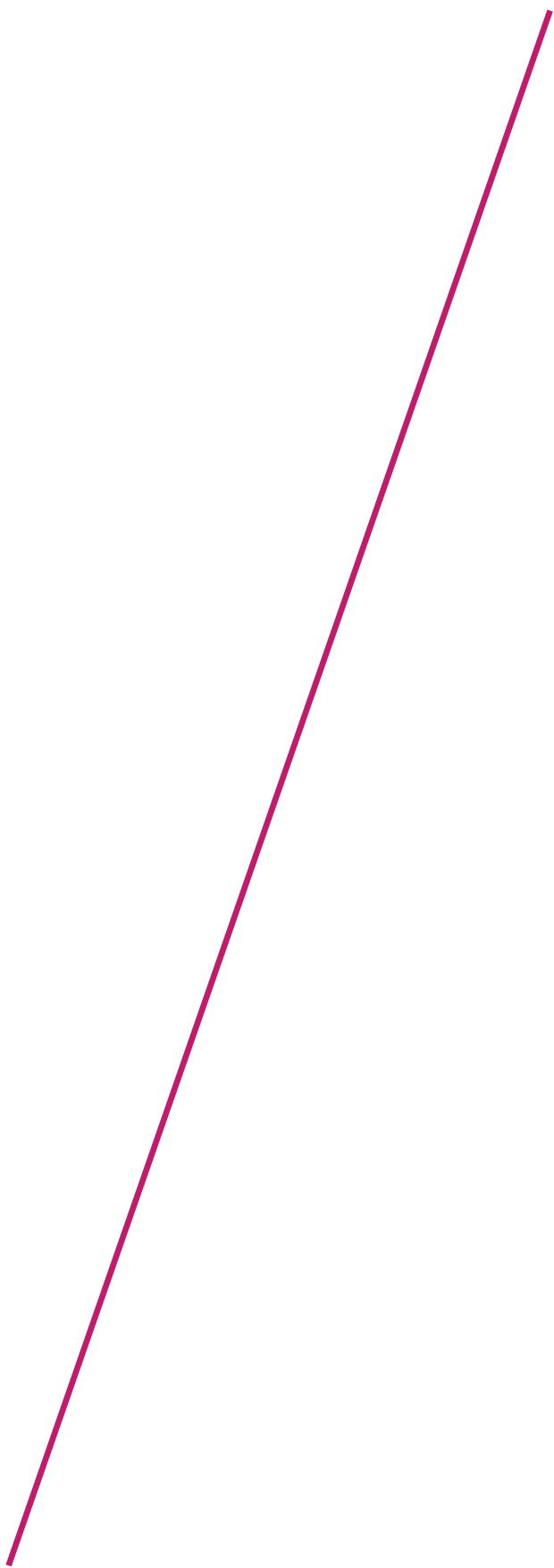
Her violin playing and singing are in a unique style: sometimes she cackles or chirps or throws her body into her performance. She plays with the best groups and orchestras around the world and draws huge crowds.

Her music is unpredictable and often cannot be characterised according to specific 'genres'. She mixes folk music, classical music and rock to create a completely individual style.

*"An Iva Bittová solo performance is unlike any other musical experience. It's an invocation of the spirit ... . And it's utterly unpredictable in its scope and presentation."*  
(Review in InnerViews)

# TOPIC 4

## BUILDING INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS



Inclusive schools are not only places of learning but also spaces where every student feels safe, seen, and valued. Building inclusive schools means involving all members of the community—students, teachers, parents, and staff—in shaping an environment where participation, dialogue, and mutual respect are the norm.

The activities in this chapter offer concrete strategies for promoting democratic school governance, shared responsibility, and active participation. They empower participants to reflect on school structures and to take part in creating a space where inclusion is practiced daily and sustained collectively.

The following activities address the following competences:

- Civic mindedness - active participation of all school stakeholders in creating inclusive and democratic schools
- Cooperation skills – working effectively with others through shared responsibility
- Empathy – understanding and valuing the feelings and perspectives of others
- Conflict resolution skills – managing disagreement through dialogue and cooperation
- Respect – recognizing the equal dignity and rights



**Read more on the Council of Europe Model of Competences -  
Reference Framework of Competences for a Democratic Culture (RFCDC)**

# ACTIVITY 1:

## WHERE DO YOU STAND

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*We all hold opinions—but how often do we reflect on where those opinions come from, or listen openly to views that differ from our own? This activity promotes critical thinking, respectful dialogue, and active listening by encouraging participants to express their views and engage with different perspectives.*

**DURATION:** 60 minutes

**PARTICIPANTS:** all are welcome

**YOU NEED:**

- PowerPoint and projector
- I AGREE / I DISAGREE signs

---

### IMPLEMENTATION:

1. Prepare two signs—"I AGREE" and "I DISAGREE"—and place them at opposite ends of the room. Ensure there's enough space in between for participants to form a straight line, representing a spectrum of agreement.
2. Explain that you will read a series of statements. Participants should respond by positioning themselves along the line—closer to "I AGREE" or "I DISAGREE," or somewhere in between, depending on the strength of their views.
3. Emphasize that this is not a debate, but a space for thoughtful reflection. People can stand anywhere along the line, including the middle, if they are unsure, undecided, or have mixed feelings.
4. Read each statement aloud, giving participants time to choose and move to a position on the line that reflects their view.
5. Invite participants at the extreme ends to explain their positions. Then, ask someone from the middle to share whether their position reflects uncertainty, a lack of knowledge, or a more nuanced opinion.
6. Allow people to change their position, as they listen to each other's comments, if they are convinced by these.
7. After all statements have been discussed, bring the group together for a collective reflection.

---

**Suggestion for statements:**

- If you are poor, human rights is a luxury.
  - It is more important to have something to eat, than to be able to say what you think.
  - Roma people are an integral part of European societies.
  - Roma parents do not want their children to go to school.
  - Men are more racist than women.
  - Love can solve any problem.
- 

**REFLECTION:**

- Was it difficult to choose a position? Why?
- Were there any statements that people found impossible to answer – either because it was difficult to make up their own mind, or because the question was badly phrased?
- Did people change position during the discussions? (check the reasoning behind staying in the middle)
- Were arguments based more on facts or on emotions? Which types of arguments were more persuasive?
- Were people surprised by the extent of disagreement on the issues?
- Do you think the statements were fair or problematic? How can we assess the validity of such claims?
- Does it matter if we disagree? What are some constructive ways in which we, as a society, can discuss these issues?

*For teachers:*

- Can you see this activity being used in your classroom?
- What is the educational value of this activity?

## ACTIVITY 2:

# A LETTER TO THE SCHOOL

---

*This is a role play to enable discussions about the mechanisms for democratic governance of a school, with focus on participation of teachers, students, parents, etc.*

**DURATION:** 90 minutes

**PARTICIPANTS:** 4+

**YOU NEED:**

- Paper and pens for the groups to take notes
- A person who can play the role of a potential grantmaker

---

### IMPLEMENTATION:

1. Divide the participants in four equal groups: teachers, administration, parents and pupils.
2. Give the following instructions to the groups:

*"Imagine you are an average school in Romania. You have decent financing, and your material needs are more or less satisfied. Take 7 minutes in your small groups to brainstorm what you would like to make/build/repair/improve/ organise in your school if you had more money. Make a list."*
3. While the groups are finalising their wish list, ask the participants' attention for an e-mail message received by the school. Read it out loud:

*Dear school community,*

*I was a pupil in your school several years ago. Meanwhile I've graduated from university, and I became very successful. I believe this became possible thanks to the competencies I developed during school time.*

*Being very thankful, I'd like to donate to my former school the sum of 50 000 euro. You can spend it for any purpose, with only one condition - the decision about how to spend the money should be taken in a democratic way and by taking into consideration the opinions of students, teachers, parents and school administration. I'll be glad to pay a visit to the school and hand over the money. I'll be around in 20 minutes, and I'll be happy to hear about how you took the decision about how to use the funds.*

*However, if the decision-making procedure is not democratic, I'll have to withdraw my proposal of donation. I'll have only 10 minutes to spend at school.*

*Yours truly, Maria/Mario*

4. Let the group members organise themselves and make the decision on what to invest in, without intervening.
5. The guest comes in (a trainer, another teacher, a pupil who has been informed in advance) and the handover meeting takes place. The guest listens, and the group has to agree if the decision-making procedures are democratic.
6. If the procedure was democratic, the guest can sign a check and pretend to donate the 50 000 euros to the school. If the decision was not taken democratically, or not at all, then the donation should not be made. The guest leaves.
7. Participants come together in a circle to discuss, still in their assigned roles. Go to reflection part 1 before continuing.
8. Exit the role play through clapping, changing place in the room etc, and ask participants to reflect now from outside the role they played in the exercise. Go to reflection part 2.

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#### REFLECTION PART 1:

- What are your emotions at this moment?
- To what extent are you satisfied with the procedure of decision making?
- Were the interests of your group taken into consideration? (Ask representatives of each of the 4 groups: teachers, administration, pupils, parents.)
- If applicable - how did it feel when your opinion was ignored?

#### REFLECTION PART 2:

- What kind of decision-making processes and bodies exist in your school?
- Were any of these used in this activity?
- What makes the governance of a school democratic?
- What are the advantages of democratic governance? What are the risks of democratic governance?
- What can be done by administration, students, teachers, parents for the democratization of their school's governance?

## ACTIVITY 3:

# BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE SCHOOL

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*This activity encourages participants to reflect on what an inclusive school looks like and to collaboratively create a vision for such a school. It also helps participants take the first steps toward turning that vision into reality.*

**DURATION:** 90 minutes

**PARTICIPANTS:** at least 3 people

**YOU NEED:**

- Coloured paper
- Cardboard
- Scissors
- Glue
- Markers

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### IMPLEMENTATION:

1. Begin by asking participants to imagine what an inclusive school looks and feels like. You can guide this reflection through a short visualisation exercise or, alternatively, begin with an analysis of challenges faced in a real school context.
2. Divide participants into 3–5 groups. These can be equal-sized or formed according to roles or interests—for example, students, teachers, support staff, and school administration.
3. Each group discusses the key features of an inclusive and democratic school.
4. Using the materials provided, ask each group to contribute to a collective collage that represents their vision of an inclusive school. Alternatively, each group can create its own collage.
5. Once the collages are completed, each group presents the important features of an inclusive and democratic school. Conclude with a debriefing.

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### REFLECTION:

- How far is this vision from reality?
- Does this collage have elements from reality or is it completely made up?
- Which of these elements already exist?
- What does not exist at all, and why?
- What is needed for the school to become more inclusive and democratic?
- What can you do to contribute to this?
- Make a plan for what you, as a teacher, can do already next week, during the next school period, until the end of the school year, during the next academic year. Share these ideas with your colleagues.



## ACTIVITY 4:

# TOWARDS A DEMOCRATIC SCHOOL POLICY

*This activity is based on a series of case studies derived from everyday school life that require specific responses from the teacher or from the school. It encourages critical thinking, group discussion, and the application of democratic competences in resolving challenges.*

**DURATION:** 60 minutes

**PARTICIPANTS:** at least 4 people

**YOU NEED:**

- The handout “Cases” at the end of this activity, printed and cut out into individual scenarios
- The “Butterfly Model” of the Competences for Democratic Culture

### IMPLEMENTATION:

1. Participants should be divided into groups of 4-5 people. Begin by explaining to the participants that each group will be given a short case study based on a school-related situation. Their task is to read, discuss, and develop a group response or solution.
  - Can/does this scenario happen in your school/class? Is there an underlying reason for this situation?
  - What will you do to address the situation?
  - Was it difficult to choose a common solution?
2. Distribute one case study per group and allow them time to read and discuss.
3. Once the discussion time is over, invite the groups to present their case to the full group and share the solution they proposed.
4. Then ask feedback from the bigger group:
  - What happened in this case?
  - What was your group's initial reaction?
5. Next, ask participants to return to their groups and identify which of the competences from the reference framework are necessary to be deployed by the teachers involved in each case.
6. Once the groups have finished discussing, ask each group to present their conclusions and have a final reflection in plenary.

### REFLECTION:

- What competences are required to respond constructively in this case?
- Choose 3–5 relevant competences from the Butterfly Model.

# HANDOUT: CASE STUDIES

## CASE 1.

During class, students begin whispering and passing a note. After some hesitation, they hand it over. You discover that the note contains a hurtful comment about a Roma student's clothing. The targeted student is unaware of the note's content.

## CASE 2.

You are working in a diverse classroom where different nationalities are represented. Children interact among each other well during the class, but you start to notice that during break times students form small groups hardly ever interact with one another.

## CASE 3.

As part of a regular news review at the start of class, the topic of migration comes up. Students share their knowledge and views on migration statistics that were presented in an article. One student suddenly says that he wishes that all Roma would move to another country because they do not contribute to the country's economy at all. You do not have any Roma students in your class.

## CASE 4.

A student in your class is frequently absent. You find out that the student is being bullied online. Even some photos of the student were passed around. You know that if the absences continue, the student may fail and repeat the year.

## CASE 5.

You're participating in a mobility programme in Lithuania. The school you work in is welcoming refugees from Ukraine. Several students from Ukraine join your class, two having a Roma background. You observe that students of Ukrainian descent are warmly welcomed by other pupils, while the Roma students spend most time on their own and largely avoided by peers.

## ACTIVITY 5:

# TO WHAT EXTEND ARE WE AN INCLUSIVE & DEMOCRATIC SCHOOL COMMUNITY?

*This activity is a mapping exercise and can be used to assess to what extent a school is inclusive and democratic. It covers three areas of school life: governance and culture, teaching and learning processes and partnership with the community. It can be used in small groups of teachers, as well as in groups including different stakeholders of school life for example teachers, school leaders, students. Based on the mapping, the school's needs and challenges become clearer and a plan for action can be developed.*

**DURATION:** 90 minutes

**PARTICIPANTS:** small groups

**YOU NEED:**

- Printed Mapping tool “TO WHAT EXTEND ARE WE AN INCLUSIVE AND DEMOCRATIC SCHOOL COMMUNITY” (page 53–55)
- Flipchart paper and markers
- Pens and highlighters
- Sticky notes (optional, for voting and prioritization)
- Projector to present WSA and display indicators

### IMPLEMENTATION

- Underline that this activity supports reflection on how inclusive and democratic one's own school environment is.
- Encourage participants to assess current practices, identify strengths and challenges, and propose actions for improvement, particularly regarding the inclusion of vulnerable groups.

#### Small Groups: Mapping (20 minutes)

1. Distribute printed mapping tool (see handout provided on page 53–55) describing inclusive and democratic school practices.
2. Participants work in small groups to assess existing practices in their school.
3. They go through each question of the mapping grid, using a simple scale “Not at all”, “A Little”, “Partially”, “To a High Degree” to evaluate each

indicator. They need to agree as a group which scale to tick for each indicator.

4. Encourage participants to highlight areas of strength and areas needing improvement.

#### Group Discussion: Prioritization and Action Planning (40 minutes)

5. Bring participants together in a plenary discussion.
6. Each group presents their main findings, answering:
  - What is going well in our school?
  - What is missing?
  - Where is urgent action needed?
7. As findings are shared, key points visibly (flipchart or board) under three headings: Strengths / Needs / Urgent Priorities.



8. After all presentations, facilitate collective prioritization. Each small group:
  - Identify and agree on the three most urgent needs.
  - For each priority, brainstorm concrete actions that the school community can take.
9. Summarize the results as the starting point for a School Action Plan Then, bring everyone together for a short group reflection (15 minutes).

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## REFLECTION

- What insights emerged during our school mapping exercise? Encourage people to reflect on what they learned.
- Which small changes could we introduce immediately to make our school more inclusive and democratic? Emphasizes a power of small, achievable steps linked to the goal!
- In what ways can we meaningfully involve students, parents, and other community members in shaping a more inclusive school? Encourage thinking not just about involvement, but meaningful participation.

### FOR FACILITATORS:

- Emphasize openness, respect, and constructive dialogue.
- Remind participants that inclusion is an ongoing journey, not a one-time evaluation.
- Remind participants that meaningful change often starts with small, consistent actions.
- Encourage the use of this mapping tool also as part of school development discussions and action planning for future projects.

# MAPPING TOOL: TO WHAT EXTEND ARE WE AN INCLUSIVE & DEMOCRATIC SCHOOL COMMUNITY?

For each indicator/ question place a tick in the appropriate box!

DEMOCRATIC AND INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE & CULTURE	Indicator/question	Not at all	A little	Partially	To a high degree
	The school mission/ vision/school policies state a focus on helping each child achieve his or her goals and develop their full potential regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, race, disability or sexual orientation.				
	Equal treatment for everyone and the prevention of discrimination are explicitly mentioned in the school regulations.				
	Specific procedures are in place to prevent and address incidents of discrimination at school.				
	Clear guidelines are in place for how staff should respond to incidents of discrimination or exclusion.				
	Programs or spaces promoting inclusion and diversity in school are in place.				
	Mediation services are available and offered by trained members of the school community/ professionals.				
	The school environment is both physical and social inclusive of all cultures.				
	The students have a platform (e.g., student council, suggestion box) to express their opinions and participate in decision-making in the school.				
	The students from marginalized groups, including Roma students, children with disabilities, etc are encouraged to participate in student council/ school leadership				

TEACHING & LEARNING PROCESSES	Indicator/question	Not at all	A little	Partially	To a high degree
	Is the language of instruction at your school inclusive of all cultures?				
	Do minority languages play a role in your school?				
	Do you teach about cultural, ethnic, religious diversity (including e.g. the history, culture of minorities) either in separate subjects or as clear components of other subjects?				
	Teachers address challenges such as racism, discrimination and xenophobia in their lessons and/or in extracurricular activities?				
	Teachers use interactive and students-centered methods in their classrooms on a regular basis, in which they include children from marginalized groups (Roma, special needs, refugee children).				
	All students have equal access to school resources, learning opportunities and extracurricular activities.				
	Are students encouraged to work together and support one another, regardless of their background or abilities?				

	Indicator/question	Not at all	A little	Partially	To a high degree
PARTNERSHIP WITH THE COMMUNITY & ENGAGEMENT	Students carry out projects related to inclusion in the school community.				
	Teachers and other school staff are regularly trained on inclusive education, anti-discrimination.				
	Your school cooperates with a municipality / local authority on issues of inclusion?				
	Your school cooperates with NGOs, public and private institutions, local community members to bring issues of inclusion into the classroom and school (e.g. organize trainings, joint events or extracurricular activities).				
	Organizations involved in the inclusion of marginalized groups are working with the school to include children from those groups.				
	Parents from all backgrounds are encouraged and supported to participate in school activities.				
	School events are organized with the participation of children and /or parents including those from marginalized groups.				
	Your school cooperates with other schools in the country to promote inclusion and diversity?				
MONITORING & EVALUATION	Does the school regularly assess its policies and practices for inclusiveness and democracy?				
	Are students, parents, and staff surveyed or asked for feedback on the school's inclusiveness?				
	Do you have a plan for addressing areas of improvement identified through feedback or evaluation?				

# REFERENCES



All different, all equal - Education Pack, by the Council of Europe



COMPASITO - A Manual for Human Rights Education With Children, by the Council of Europe.



COMPASS - Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People, by the Council of Europe.



Mirrors - Manual on combating antigypsyism through human rights education - Roma Youth Participation, by the Council of Europe



Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC), by the Council of Europe



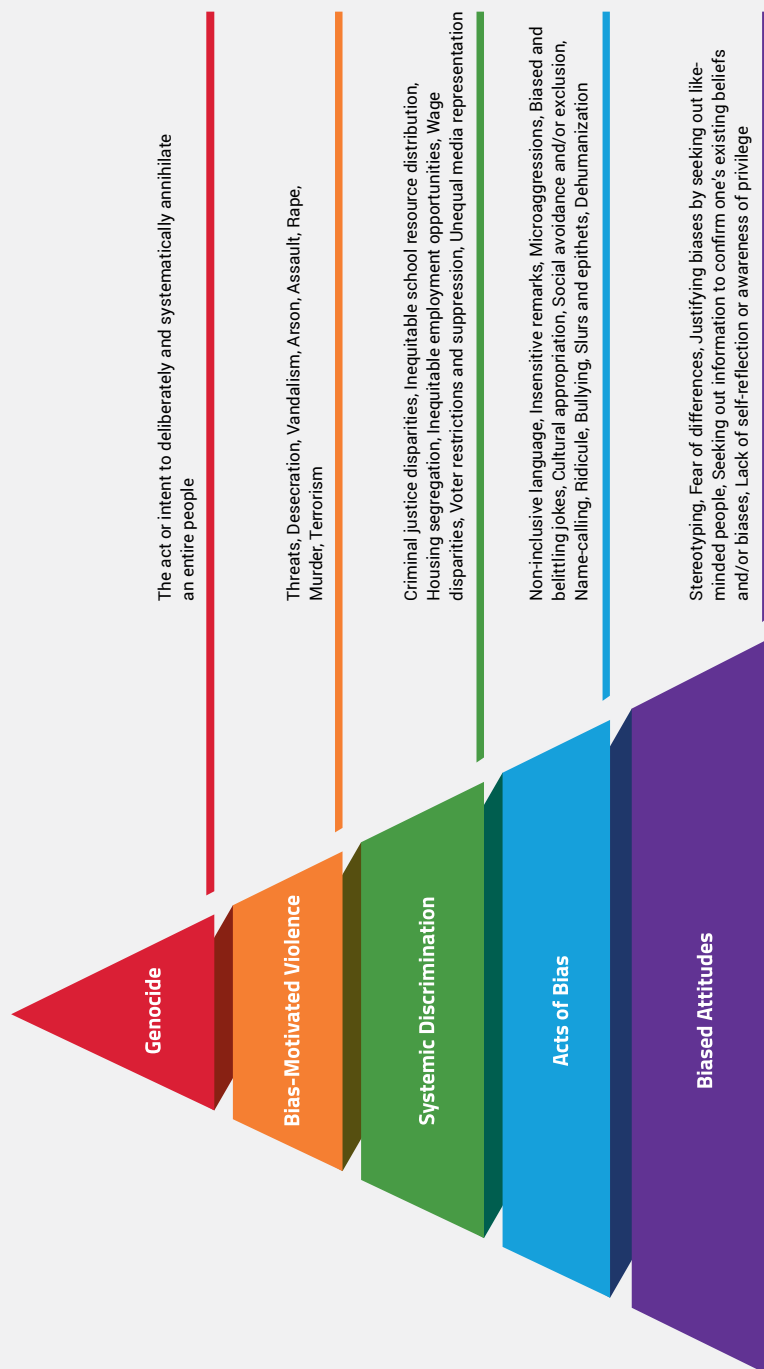
Training of Trainers Modules on Inclusive Education, by UNICEF



# ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: PYRAMIDE OF HATE

## ADL PYRAMID OF HATE

The **Pyramid of Hate** illustrates the prevalence of bias, hate and oppression in our society. It is organized in escalating levels of attitudes and behavior that grow in complexity from bottom to top. Like a pyramid, the upper levels are supported by the lower levels; unlike a pyramid, the levels are not built consecutively or to demonstrate a ranking of each level. Bias at each level reflects a system of oppression that negatively impacts individuals, institutions and society. Unchecked bias can become “normalized” and contribute to a pattern of accepting discrimination, violence and injustice in society. While every biased attitude or act does not lead to genocide, genocide takes place within a system of oppression in which the attitudes and actions described at the lower levels of the pyramid are accepted. When we challenge those biased attitudes and behaviors in ourselves, others and institutions, we can interrupt the escalation of bias and make it more difficult for discrimination and hate to flourish.



Pyramid of Hate © 2021 Anti-Defamation League

The European Wergeland Centre (EWC) was established in 2008 by Norway in close cooperation with the Council of Europe. The European Wergeland Centre promotes democracy and human rights across Europe through education. Our mission is to strengthen the capacity of children and young people, educators, educational institutions, and educational systems to build and defend a culture of democracy and human rights.

This booklet was developed by the European Wergeland Centre for use in teacher training as well as for use in classrooms to promote Roma inclusion.

The booklet offers a selection of activities that highlights four key topics which are essential for providing quality and inclusive education: inclusion & human rights, stereotypes & prejudice, Roma culture & history and building an inclusive school.

The tools support the transformation of schools into welcoming, equitable environments where all students—including those from minority backgrounds, especially Roma students—can thrive and reach their full potential.

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