

WORK PLAN 2025

INTERSECTIONAL MEASURES PROMOTING ADVOCACY, COLLABORATION, & TRANSFORMATION



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Authors: Amira Bakr & Adnana Turkić

Editor: Francesca Osima

Report Design: Silvia Sanz Linares

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DEFINITIONS

Brave Spaces - Environments where individuals feel supported and safe enough to engage in challenging, sometimes uncomfortable conversations on sensitive topics, with the aim of fostering growth, accountability, and deeper understanding.

Critical Pedagogy - Method of education that challenges systems of oppression and empowers learners to become active agents of change through reflection, dialogue, and action.

Empowerment Practices - Strategies and activities that strengthen individuals' confidence, agency, and leadership capacity, especially those from underrepresented or marginalised groups.

Feminist leadership - Individual and/or organisational approach that reflects the feminist vision and values of non-discrimination, diversity, equality, inclusion, and justice the feminist movement wants to advance in the world..

Gender Watch - Monitoring practice during meetings or events that observes and reports on gender dynamics, such as speaking time distribution, representation, or discriminatory behaviours, to promote inclusivity.

Inclusive Language - Intentional use of words and expressions that respect diverse identities and avoid reinforcing stereotypes or exclusion (e.g., gender pronouns, non-binary terms).

Inclusive Tools - Methods, practices, or activities designed to ensure equal participation and representation of diverse voices, taking into account different identities, abilities, and needs.

Intersectionality - Intellectual framework for understanding how various aspects of individual identity – including race, gender, social class, and sexuality – interact to create unique experiences of privilege or oppression.

Liberation Groups - Peer-based identity spaces designed to encourage solidarity, self-reflection, and collective empowerment, where participants explore how their identities intersect with systems of power and oppression.

Non-Formal Education - Organised educational activities outside formal schooling, based on participatory, experiential, and learner-centred methods, often used in youth work and activism.

Organisational Leadership Audit - Reflective process used to examine how leadership structures, decision-making, and organisational culture align with principles of feminist leadership and intersectionality.

Power Dynamics - The ways in which power is distributed and exercised within groups and organisations, shaping who feels safe, heard, and included (and vice-versa) in decision-making and participation processes.

Safeguarding - Policies and practices that ensure the safety and well-being of participants, preventing harm, abuse, or discrimination in organisational and event contexts.

Safe Person - Designated individual, at an event or within an organisation, responsible for providing confidential support and ensuring participants feel protected and respected.

Safe Spaces - Environments intentionally created to ensure participants feel physically and emotionally secure, free from harassment, discrimination, or violence.

SPARK Feedback Model - Participatory feedback method (Specific, Positive, Action-oriented, Realistic, Kind) used to promote constructive and supportive peer learning.

Transformative Learning - Educational approach that enables individuals to critically reflect on their assumptions, shift perspectives, and develop new ways of thinking and acting for social change.



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT OBESSU

The **Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions** (OBESSU) is the platform for cooperation between **national school student unions** active in **general secondary and secondary vocational education** in Europe. Since its foundation in 1975, OBESSU has strived to be **the voice of young students**, representing their interests and needs through democratic, representative, and inclusive processes, fostering spaces for dialogue, creating tools for participation, and encouraging cross-border cooperation and solidarity among students.

OBESSU's vision is that young people are **indispensable stakeholders** in debates concerning their education and rights, both at national and European level. School students are active agents of change, and OBESSU supports them by **fostering democratic and representative structures**, equipping them with the tools and knowledge to advocate for their rights and advocating for just and inclusive educational systems. By ensuring that policies reflect the realities and needs of young people, and by fostering healthy and supportive environments, OBESSU empowers students to actively shape society and **advances active citizenship** in all its forms.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The findings presented in this Booklet are the result of the 2025 OBESSU's project **IMPACT** (Intersectional Measures Promoting Advocacy, Collaboration, and Transformation), funded by the **European Youth Foundation** of the **Council of Europe**.

This Booklet contributes to responding to the alarming rollback of minorities' rights across Europe and the weakening of intersectional approaches in public discourse. With rising attacks on the rights of women, migrants, and minorities, and growing divides in how feminist issues are understood across countries, IMPACT aims to strengthen OBESSU and its Member Organisations' capacities to promote **gender equality** through an **intersectional lens**.

According to the most recent European survey on discrimination¹, **more than half** of respondents perceived **widespread discrimination** in their country, particularly on the basis of skin colour, ethnic origin, gender identity, and sexual orientation.

¹ European Commission. Special Eurobarometer 535 – Discrimination in the European Union. European Union. December 2023. <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2972>

Compared with a similar survey conducted in 2019, the data show a worrying general upward trend, and a specific rise of discrimination linked to **gender identity** and **sex characteristics**.

In this climate, it is more urgent than ever to recognise what is happening and take action, starting from the youth field. Youth organisations mirror the societies they live in, but they are also the first **agents of change**. While decision-makers tend to get stuck in political debates concerning minor details, youth workers are active every day in their communities, implementing activities and practices that have a long-lasting impact on the people around them and, ultimately, on society as a whole. The main aim of IMPACT is to advance gender mainstreaming among youth workers and student activists to **build inclusive, intersectional student organisations** capable of driving systemic change.

The term **intersectionality** was first used by Kimberle Crenshaw, an American civil rights advocate and a scholar of critical race theory, in an article addressing the problematic “tendency to treat race and gender as mutually exclusive categories of experience and analysis”² of discrimination. Crenshaw argued that the experiences of Black women were shaped by a combination of race- and gender-based prejudices, resulting in a specific situation of disadvantage. Since its introduction, the concept of intersectionality has gained **widespread recognition** and has been expanded beyond its original framework. Today, it includes a wide spectrum of social classifications, such as socio-economic class, sexual orientation, age, physical or intellectual disabilities, and other aspects of individual identity. The central insight of intersectionality is that these **dimensions of identity** do not operate in isolation; instead, they **intersect**, creating unique experiences of privilege and oppression for each person.

In the context of education and youth activism, intersectionality helps to identify how overlapping forms of disadvantage can affect **young people’s access** to opportunities, leadership roles, and participation in decision-making processes. By understanding these dynamics, youth organisations can develop **fairer practices**, ensuring that every student (particularly those from marginalised groups) has the space, support, and resources they need to thrive.

² Crenshaw K. Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics. In “University of Chicago Legal Forum”, 1989 (1). 1989.
<https://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1052&context=uclf>

Intersectionality has now been incorporated into various **policy frameworks** across Europe. In 2020, the European Commission launched the Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025³, outlining objectives and actions to advance towards a gender-equal Europe. Within this framework, the Commission identified intersectionality as a horizontal principle guiding its implementation. Some European countries, such as Belgium⁴ and Latvia⁵, have also acknowledged the importance of an intersectional approach to achieving gender equality and have explicitly referenced it in their national/regional plans. However, in most cases, the adoption of intersectionality remains more aspirational than practical. The concept's radical and transformative ambitions are diluted in practice, or not applied at all⁶. This is partly due to its relatively recent inclusion in policy agendas and to the complexity of translating the concept into practice, but also to the broader reluctance of institutional structures to confront their own systems of systemic discrimination. Unfortunately, the same pattern can be observed even in less formal spaces, including within the youth field. This is precisely where the relevance and urgency of the IMPACT project lies.

³ European Commission. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025. 2020. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0152>

⁴ Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles. Plan “Droits des femmes” 2020-2024. 2020 http://www.egalite.cfwb.be/index.php?elD=tx_nawsecuredl&u=0&q=0&hash=fba5f84be288ad0d20ffc7c6da00b8b6df5d46fa&file=fileadmin/sites/sdec.III/upload/sdec.III.super_editor/sdec.III.editor/documents/Droits_des_Femmes/Plan_Droits_des_Femmes_2020-2024_FWB.pdf

⁵ Cabinet of Latvian Ministers. Cabinet of Ministers Order No. 500. 2024. <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/352925-par-sieviesu-un-viriesu-vienlidzigu-tiesibu-un-iespeju-veicinasanas-planu-20242027-gadam>

⁶ Debusscher P., Maes E. L. The European Union-Intersectionality Framework: Unpacking Intersectionality in the ‘Union of Equality’ Agenda. In “Political Studies Review”, 23(1), 2024

OBJECTIVES OF THE IMPACT 2025 PROJECT

- ★ to equip youth workers and student activists with tools to integrate gender and intersectional perspectives in their governance structures and activities;
- ★ to encourage peer learning on gender equality and women's rights across cultural and religious contexts, in both structural and advocacy activities;
- ★ to provide members with the tools to identify gender inequalities in education and advocate for their dismantling;
- ★ to reflect on the role and participation of women in student movements, identifying and addressing structural barriers.

As we have seen, young women and gender minorities continue to face exclusion, discrimination, and unequal access to opportunities in education and leadership. IMPACT addresses these challenges by focusing on **three key groups** (trainers, youth workers, and student leaders), building their capacity to foster inclusive environments and support a new generation of feminist activists. This has happened through **three different activities**.



A **Training of Trainers** that took place in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, in March 2025, focused on teaching trainers how to establish intersectional spaces in non-formal education.



A **Study Visit for youth workers, volunteers and staff** from OBESSU's Member Organisations, which took place in Brussels, Belgium, in May 2025. Here, the goal was to teach youth workers how to integrate feminist and inclusive practices in their organisations' governance structures and activities.



A **Training Course for International Officers**, held in Mollina, Spain, in September 2025, preparing participants to act as multipliers for women's and minorities' rights advocacy within their national organisations.



CHAPTER 2

THE ACTIVITIES

TRAINING OF TRAINERS

The **Training of Trainers** (ToT) served as a kick-off activity of the IMPACT project and took place in Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina) from the 11th to the 15th March 2025. It brought together **12 participants** from across Europe with diverse backgrounds in youth activism, education, and advocacy, all active within OBESSU's Pool of Trainers or member organisations. The final objective was to build participants' capacity to **create inclusive and intersectional learning spaces** in non-formal education.

Rooted in feminist and inclusive values, the training combined interactive sessions, group work, and space for critical reflection. It encouraged trainers to question existing power dynamics and explore how they can contribute to more equitable educational environments. Moreover, they explored what intersectionality means in practice, how to move beyond theory and apply it meaningfully in their training work, organisational structures, and educational approaches.



LESSONS LEARNT

Participants brought a wide range of experiences, perspectives, and levels of engagement with gender and intersectionality. This diversity sparked rich discussions, peer learning, and collective reflection on how to challenge inequalities and promote intersectional approaches in youth-led spaces. On a general level, participants concluded that **inclusion is proactive**, which means that the objective should be to anticipate needs, rather than react to them, and **an ongoing process** that requires systemic feedback loops and learning moments to improve. Most importantly, there is **no one-size-fits-all solution**: everyone has a unique experience of privilege/oppression, therefore it is important that trainers (and trainings) stay flexible and open to considering individual consent and **personal agency**.

On a more concrete level, participants generated a range of ideas for building more inclusive environments in practice, which can be summarised in the following **key themes**.

ACCESS & EQUITY

During the sessions, participants identified multiple **access barriers** and proposed ways to address them:

- * Advocate for **administrative support** or **remote inclusion** when it comes to status-related restrictions, such as visa requirements;
- * Ensure, as best as possible, **financial accessibility**, by covering or subsidizing transport, meals, and/or accommodation;
- * Acknowledge participants' **care responsibilities** (e.g. for children or dependents) by offering childcare or flexible scheduling
- * Address **material barriers** by ensuring access to devices, platforms, or physical tools;
- * Provide both **physical and mental accessibility** by creating calm zones, minimizing overstimulation, and offering emotional support;
- * Offer **language support** (such as interpretation and translation) to avoid linguistic exclusion.

COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

Participants stressed that **clear, transparent, and anticipatory communication** is fundamental to ensure an inclusive environment during every event. In particular, they reflected on important steps that trainers and youth workers should take before the events, in order to make sure that participants feel safe and included. These include, but are not limited to:

- * Sharing **sensitive activities** and providing alternative options to enhance participation;
- * Asking participants about **special needs** (such as religious observance, dietary restrictions, or caring responsibilities) in advance;
- * Preparing supportive **reflection spaces** to process challenging moments and integrate learning;
- * Establishing **ground rules**, to foster a culture of healthy communication and psychological safety.

WELLBEING & EMOTIONAL SAFETY

Participants stressed that **clear, transparent, and anticipatory communication** is fundamental to ensure an inclusive environment during every event. In particular, they reflected on important steps that trainers and youth workers should take before the events, in order to make sure that participants feel safe and included. These include, but are not limited to:

- * Provide **safe spaces** and designated safe persons for confidential support;
- * Be **attentive** to stress, tension, and anxiety, particularly when activities are emotionally charged or unexpected events happen;
- * Introduce **emotional check-ins** and debriefs after intensive sessions;
- * Implement practices to support **collective resilience**.

STUDY VISIT FOR YOUTH WORKERS AND STAFF

The **Staff Study Visit** took place between the 20th and 23rd of May in Brussels (Belgium). It gathered 6 youth workers in a learning and resource-sharing hub, providing a space for our Member Organisation to learn how to **integrate feminist and inclusive practices** in their activities, but also in their governance structures.

The goal of this activity was achieved by **leveraging the insights and outputs** harvested during Activity 1 and testing their impact, in an effort to ensure that gender mainstreaming and intersectionality strategies have a space within OBESSU's own Member Organisations. At the same time, the Study Visit acted as an **exchange space** to share good practices, explore intersectional perspectives, and gain inspiration from other organisations, which supported the objective of fostering and enabling peer-learning in the development of theoretical and practical knowledge on the principles of inclusivity and intersectionality. Participants built together a **brave space** where they openly shared issues related to gender equality and feminist leadership they encounter in their daily work and engaged with external experts (staff members from Brussels-based NGOs), gaining insights into their best practices.



LESSONS LEARNT

The activities offered space for participants to **deepen their understanding** of feminist leadership and intersectionality, especially in the context of their daily work. Even though initially sceptical, by the end of the training participants came up with **concrete ideas** they could implement or propose within their own organisations. The activities also encouraged **critical reflection** on past practices related to empowerment, safeguarding, and inclusivity, enabling participants to identify gaps and opportunities for improvement.

Throughout the entire activity, participants actively applied one of the key principles emphasised during the Training of Trainers (ToT): respecting a **set of community rules** to ensure a safe and inclusive environment for everyone involved. These included:

- * Using jazz hands instead of clapping to reduce noise and prevent acoustic discomfort;
- * Scheduling frequent, shorter breaks to avoid fatigue and maintain focus;
- * Refraining from judging others for the questions they asked; Avoiding corrections of grammatical mistakes as long as the message was clear;
- * Saying aloud “*Bora Bora*” whenever someone feels excluded due to others speaking in their mother tongue.

During a very fruitful, open discussion, participants brainstormed what it means to practice **feminist leadership**, starting from a comparison between the latter and its more traditional form.

* **Traditional leadership** was associated with the image of a powerful man in a suit: a figure who centralises all decision-making power and is perceived as irreplaceable within a rigid hierarchical structure. While such leadership may be characterised by charisma and confidence, it frequently comes with a downside: a tendency toward authoritarian and controlling behaviour. This approach often manifests through the imposition of strict rules, limited openness to collaboration, and a lack of genuine human connection. Decisions are typically driven solely by the **pursuit of end goals**, with little regard for the process or the wellbeing of people involved.

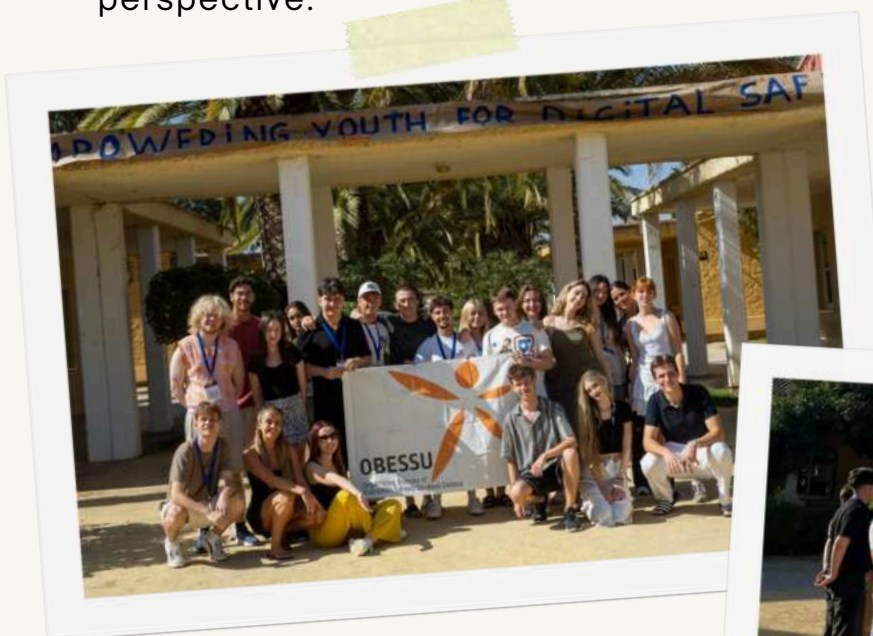
* **Feminist leadership** was described as embodying both **strength and confidence**, while remaining **respectful and understanding**. Its added value lies in the ability to retain an empathetic, **human approach** even when occupying positions of authority. Feminist leaders are seen as those who guide their teams without withholding power, but rather by **sharing** it and fostering collective responsibility. They are capable of managing complex challenges, acknowledging that **mistakes** are part of any process, including their own, and treating them as **opportunities** for accountability, learning, and growth. Above all, participants emphasised that genuine feminist leadership is inherently **inclusive**: it creates space for all voices, especially those that are marginalised, and promotes fairness, empathy, and mutual support in every interaction.

As part of the Staff Visit in Brussels, OBESSU invited **external organisations** and experts to share their experiences in embedding feminist leadership and intersectionality into their structures and daily work. Through round tables, testimonies, and a tools fair, participants had the opportunity to learn from established practices of other youth and civil society organisations, acquiring **concrete methods, resources, and inspiration** to adapt to their own contexts.

TRAINING COURSE FOR INTERNATIONAL OFFICERS

The **Training of International Officers** was organised within the context of the University of Youth and Development (UYD) and took place between the 14th and the 21st of September in Mollina (Spain). The activity gathered 15 international students, all coming from OBESSU Member Organisations. Since the annual theme of the UYD focused on digital safety, besides the specific objectives of the IMPACT project, participants also explored how to create **digital spaces** where women (particularly young leaders and activists) can freely express themselves, organise collectively, and contribute to shaping public discourse without the threat of abuse.

The training served as a platform for student representatives to **share good practices** of feminist leadership within their organisations and to **identify areas** where further progress is needed. Participants reviewed the outcomes of the previous project phases and, building on the knowledge and tools acquired, reflected on how to create and sustain **safe, feminist, and inclusive spaces** for young people. Additionally, the training focused on **online safeguarding, digital well-being**, and mechanisms to strengthen empowerment. The overall goal was to equip them with the skills needed to use **digital tools for women's and minorities' rights advocacy**, applying an intersectional and inclusive perspective.



LESSONS LEARNT

For many participants, this was the first time they were introduced to the concepts of intersectionality and feminist leadership, which enriched their understanding of inclusive activism and provided tools to strengthen their engagement in the future. One of the most significant outcomes was the realisation of the vast **differences in how feminism is understood** and developed **across countries**, highlighting both shared struggles and diverse realities. Participants particularly strengthened their understanding of feminist and intersectional leadership in the context of **digital spaces** and developed practical skills in communication, advocacy, and inclusive leadership that can be applied to online environments. Participants agreed that the **main barriers** to inclusivity in online spaces are patriarchal norms, hate speech, and disinformation, and reflected on how to tackle such issues whilst protecting themselves. By the end of the training, participants felt **empowered** and developed their own action plans for dissemination of the results of the training within their organisations, but also for knowledge-sharing with their members.

Participants recognised that **feminism** represents a **universal set of values** rooted in the pursuit of equal rights and freedom of choice for women (and, ultimately, every human being) across the world. At the same time, they acknowledged that feminism takes on diverse forms, reflecting the different causes, challenges, and living conditions faced by women in various contexts. This understanding is closely connected to the concept of **intersectionality**, which highlights that all experiences, especially ones of privilege and oppression, do not stem from a single factor, but from the interaction of multiple dimensions that, together, shape each person's context and reality. For example, the feminist fight of women living in Western European countries, in which the focus is mainly on workplace equality, reproductive rights, and political representation, is very different from the one of women in Africa, where struggles for gender equality are frequently connected with broader endeavours against colonial legacies and global economic inequality. Participants shared their **own experiences** with feminist advocacy and were able to identify minor, but still existing **differences**, based on the context in which they grew up and the country they live in.

When it comes to **digital spaces**, where much of today's advocacy takes place, feminist leadership must uphold its core values of equality, empathy, and inclusion.

This means using digital tools not only to amplify voices, but also to **create safer communities**, where everyone can participate without fear of harassment or exclusion. Participants were asked to reflect on what this means in practice and identified different **practices and strategies** to adopt, including:

- * **Online safeguarding:** just as in physical events, setting clear community guidelines, moderating discussions with sensitivity, and intervening when harmful behaviour occurs are essential to maintaining safe online spaces. These measures help prevent, or at least address, incidents such as hate speech and online bullying;
- * **Recognising technological limits:** Digital platforms and social media often have accessibility and inclusivity gaps. People with different abilities, limited connectivity or restricted access to resources risk being easily excluded. Feminist leaders must ensure that online spaces are designed and managed in ways that allow everyone to participate;
- * **Addressing disinformation:** women, like other marginalized groups, are disproportionately affected by the impacts of online disinformation, such as the reinforcement of harmful stereotypes and the silencing of their voices. Feminist leaders must recognise these risks and work to create informed and safe online environments. This includes, but is not limited to, fact-checking information before sharing, promoting digital literacy, and encouraging awareness and collective responsibility within the community.



CHAPTER 3

PRACTICES, ACTIVITIES & TOOLS

GALLERY OF INTERSECTIONAL PRACTICES, ACTIVITIES, AND TOOLS

Such **tools** and **practices** were **shared throughout the activities** held as part of the IMPACT project, and are divided into three groups:

- ★ **Practices** to implement during **general events** to make them more inclusive;
- ★ **Specific activities** to introduce the topic of inclusion and encourage participants to reflect on their privileges and experiences of oppression through an intersectional lens;
- ★ **Tools for organisations** to assess their governance models and activities, and to identify ways to enhance inclusivity and intersectionality.

FOR ALL EVENTS

DIVERSITY WELCOME - SHARED BY FRIEND OF THE EARTH EUROPE

A Diversity Welcome is a facilitation tool used at the beginning of an event to recognise and **validate the wide range of identities and experiences** in the room. By explicitly naming and welcoming aspects of diversity (especially those often marginalised), it creates a sense of belonging, raises awareness among all participants, and sets the tone for an inclusive learning environment. Facilitators guide the process inviting participants to add any aspects that may have been overlooked, ensuring that the group's complexity is acknowledged and celebrated.

"I'd like to welcome:

- ★ People of all genders (Women, men, trans* people and non-binary people)
- ★ People of all descents (African descent, Asian descent, Hispanic descent, European descent, people native to this land, people of multiple and mixed descent)
- ★ All the languages spoken in this room (try to find them out in advance so you can name them)
- ★ People with disabilities, visible or invisible, and neurodivergent people;
- ★ People of all ages (in their teens, 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s, 70s, 80s, 90s)
- ★ People of all sexual orientations (lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual, asexual, queer and those for whom these labels don't fit)
- ★ People with all class backgrounds (working class, middle class, owning class, those who do not know where they fit in those definitions and all the different contexts)
- ★ Our bodies, in whatever shape and size they come in, and with any pain or discomfort they may hold
- ★ People who identify as campaigners/activists, and those who don't
- ★ People from all faith and belief backgrounds, both religious and non-religious
- ★ All the emotions in the room (excitement, anxiety, anger, disappointment, grief, joy...)
- ★ Those who have made it possible for you to be here today, those who are still living and those who have died

Is there anything else we would like to welcome into this space?"

SAFE VS BRAVE SPACE

When individuals are learning or trying something new, they are putting themselves in a vulnerable position. Depending on the context and situation, trainers may need to provide a safe space or a brave space.

Safe space	Brave space
It is a space that provides protection, validation, and emotional safety. Inside it, a person should feel secure. In the context of inclusivity and intersectionality, it may aim to protect marginalized individuals from oppressive practices. Characteristics: • Prioritizes comfort and security • Avoids harm and confrontation • Can be limited to like-minded or affected individuals Examples: support groups, reflection areas	It is a space that encourages open dialogue and growth, where individuals accept disagreements and discomfort as part of learning and navigate it with respect. Inside it, a person should feel challenged in a supportive way. Characteristics: • Encourages diverse perspectives and challenges • Accepts strong emotions as long as they remain respectful Examples: trainings, workshops

GENDER WATCH

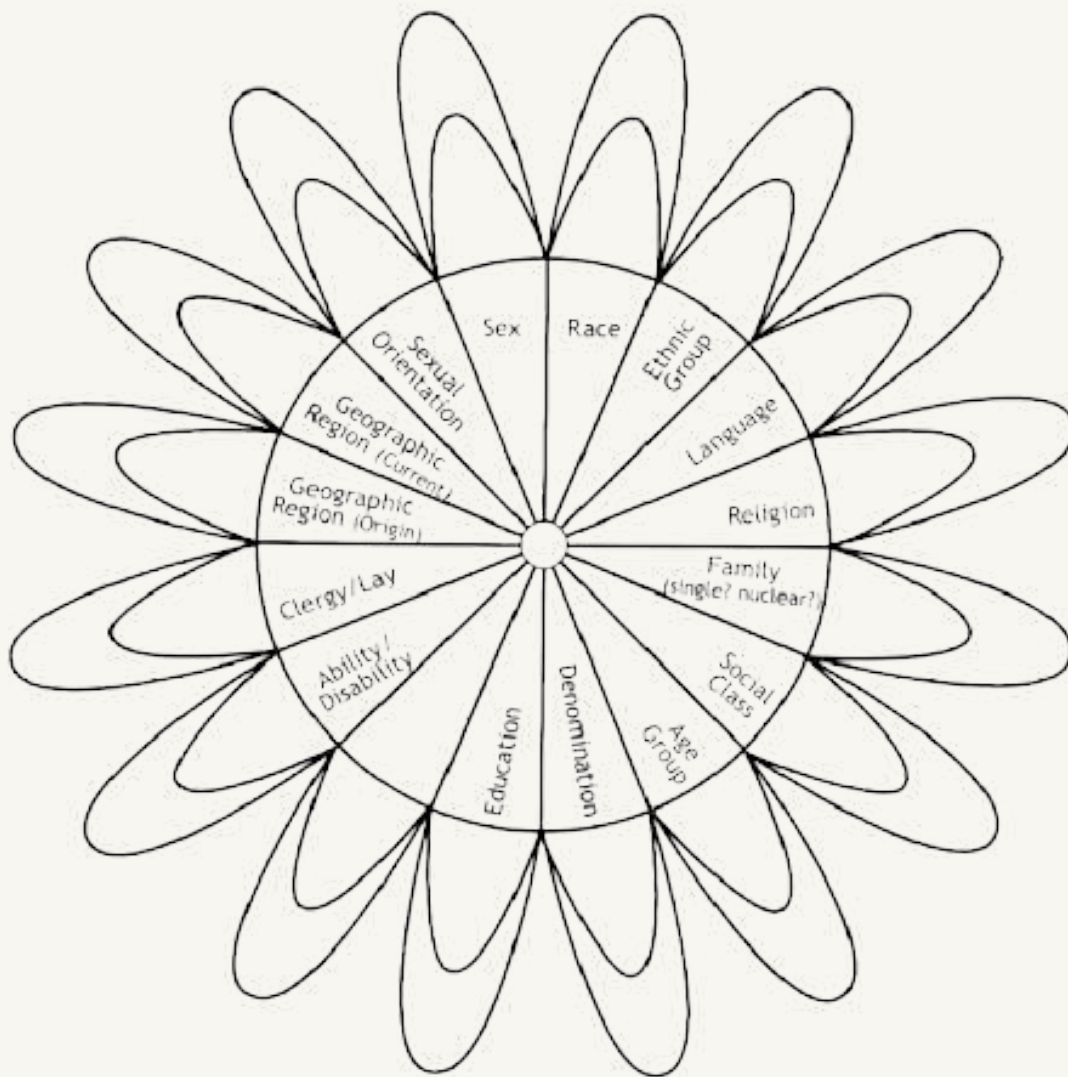
The Gender Watch is a monitoring system used by OBESSU to track speaking time according to gender during its statutory events (moments when all Member Organisations come together to discuss key issues and make collective decisions). By systematically recording both participation and non-participation, the Gender Watch provides a clear overview of engagement trends across genders. This helps identify whether discussions are being dominated by one gender and promotes more balanced and inclusive participation.

Beyond raising awareness about speaking time distribution, the Gender Watch also serves as a practical tool for moderators and chairs. It enables them to manage the speakers' list more equitably, ensure that all voices have space to be heard, and foster an environment where everyone feels empowered to contribute.

SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES

POWER FLOWER

The Power Flower⁷ is a visual exercise to explore how different elements of individuals' social identity relate to structural oppression and privilege. Participants map identities' components (such as gender, race, or family status) in the centre of the flower, identify dominant groups in the inner petals, and then position their own identities in the outer petals. By colouring and reflecting on their placement, participants gain insight into where they hold privilege or face oppression. The exercise encourages both personal reflection and group discussion, helping to raise awareness of power dynamics and the role of allies in fostering inclusion.



⁷ C Friends of the Earth. Power and Privilege.
http://zelenaakcija.hr/system/document/1281/doc_files/original/Power_and_Privilege_Curricula_module_of_the_School_of_Sustainability_SofS_.pdf

DIVERSITY WALK

Similarly, the Privilege Walk is an interactive exercise that highlights how privilege and oppression shape people's lives. Participants respond to a series of statements by stepping forward or backward, creating a visual map of the group's relative positions of privilege. The more forward the individual is, the more privileged they are. The activity helps individuals reflect on aspects of their identity, upbringing, and social context, while raising collective awareness of inequalities that may otherwise remain invisible. Through guided reflection, the tool opens space for dialogue on power, privilege, and how these dynamics impact group interactions and wider society.

Here is a list of suggestions, which you can choose to use or adapt. They were collected for a north-western European context, so be careful: criteria that would indicate privilege in that part of the world, such as owning a house or having your parents pay for higher education, may not indicate privilege in other regions. Please adapt the list both to your context and the specifics of the group you will work with.

Step forward if:	Step back if:
• You are an EU citizen • Both of your parents were EU citizens when you were born • You are a citizen of the country where you live • You are able to access social welfare • You have a higher education degree • One or both your parents have a higher education degree • You grew up knowing that your parents would pay for your higher education • You were taken to art galleries, museums, sporting events or plays by your parents • There were more than 50 books in your house when you grew up • Your family employs help (such as cleaners or gardeners) • You are white • Both of your parents are white • Your parents own a house • You own a house • You are able to move through the world without fear of sexual assault • You can show affection for your romantic partner in public without fear • You are a cis-man • You would never think twice about calling the police when trouble occurs • You studied the culture of your ancestors in primary school • The holidays of your religion are recognised as public holidays • English is your first language • You have traveled outside of the EU • You are able-bodied	• Your family has left your homeland or entered another country not of their own free will • Your family ever had to move because they could not afford to pay the rent or mortgage • The breadwinner in your family was ever unemployed while you were a child • You ever had to were hungry because there was not enough money to buy food • You or members of your family have been on welfare • You are female • You have ever been arrested or detained in a non-activist situation • Your school was conducted in a language that was not your first language • You were ever made fun of or bullied for something that was beyond your control • You ever tried to change your appearance, mannerisms, or behavior to fit in • You were ever uncomfortable about a joke related to your race, religion, ethnicity, gender, disability, or sexual orientation but felt unsafe to confront the situation • You have been divorced or impacted by divorce • You are under 21 or over 60 years old • There was ever substance abuse or other forms of addiction in your family • You come from a single-parent household • You or someone else in your family suffered or suffers from mental illness • You have an invisible or visible illness or disability

-ISMS

Most people in Europe live with forms of privilege (often without even realising it), taking for granted advantages that are not equally shared by everyone, such as not being discriminated against because of one's identity. To help uncover these dynamics, a useful practice is to reflect on the many forms of discrimination that shape our societies, the so-called “-isms”. Below is a non-exhaustive list that can serve as a starting point for discussion and learning.

Racism - Discrimination or prejudice against people based on their ethnicity, often involving the belief that some of them are superior to others.

Sexism - Discrimination or unfair treatment based on someone's sex or gender. It usually privileges men over women, but can affect all genders.

Ageism - Prejudice or discrimination against people because of their age, such as assuming older people are less capable or younger people are irresponsible.

Ableism - Discrimination against people with disabilities, assuming that being non-disabled is the “normal” or superior way to live.

Classism - Prejudice or unfair treatment based on social or economic class, often privileging the rich over the poor.

Elitism - Prejudice or discrimination against people based on their education, wealth, or social status, usually favouring individuals perceived as more educated, wealthy, or influential

Colourism - Discrimination based on skin tone, usually within the same ethnic group, where lighter skin is treated as more favorable than darker skin.

Sizeism - Prejudice or unfair treatment based on a person's body size or shape, often privileging thinner bodies

FOR ORGANISATIONS

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION CHECKLIST - SHARED BY INTERNATIONAL FALCON MOVEMENT - SOCIALIST EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL

The Diversity and Inclusion Checklist⁸ has been created by IFM-SEI to identify best practices for promoting diversity and inclusion. It is a simple self-assessment guide to support organisations in ensuring their projects and youth work are inclusive and available to diverse young people. The checklist is divided into three main categories (organisational culture, events and activities, and communication), each one providing a set of basic guiding questions that you can use to help identify strengths and areas needing further attention. Of course, the checklist is fully customizable: feel free to add questions that feel valuable and relevant to your context.

For each question, organisations should:

1. Look back: reflect on your current practices to advance an inclusive approach;
2. Look at: reflect on what still needs to be done;
3. Look ahead: identify next steps and concrete actions to foster diversity and inclusion.

This is an example of questions. You can find the full list [here](#).

Organisational Culture

- ☐ What does being inclusive and diverse mean to you as a movement?
- ☐ How do the decision-making structures in your organisation represent the diversity of your membership?
- ☐ What are the barriers for participation in leadership positions?
- ☐ Do you provide or enable training courses on diversity and inclusion strategies to your employees and volunteers?
- ☐ Are your headquarters fully accessible and provide infrastructure and opportunities for people with various needs?
- ☐ Do you seek partnerships with organisations when you are lacking expertise?

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⁸ IFM-SEI. Diversity and Inclusion Checklist. <https://ifm-sei.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Diversity-and-Inclusion-Checklist-EN.pdf>

Events and Activities

- ☐ Who are usually the participants in your events? Are there specific groups of young people that are missing from your activities?
- ☐ Does the venue, food, speakers and other logistics reflect the different access needs of young people? Is the location accessible?
- ☐ Have you considered the obstacles, both practical and personal, that can block young people from participating in projects?
- ☐ Do you have anti-discrimination measures in place? Do young people involved in your organisation and events have the knowledge on whom to turn to in case of breach of code of conduct?
- ☐ Do your activity themes encourage discussion or raise awareness on inclusion issues within your group?
- ☐ Are the trainers and facilitators aware of topics such as diversity and inclusion and have the adequate competencies to address it in the training?

Communication

- ☐ How do you disseminate the open call for an activity? Does it reach young people from fewer opportunity backgrounds? What kind of format and communication tools do you use?
- ☐ Do you directly invite young people with fewer opportunities?
- ☐ Does the target group you are addressing understand the concept of your activity? Do they know what an international project looks like?
- ☐ Are you using child and youth-friendly and gender-neutral language in your communication?
- ☐ Are your online registration forms inclusive?
- ☐ Are you including visual description in the posts and subtitles in the video?

PRINCIPLES OF GOOD GOVERNANCE - SHARED BY INTERNATIONAL FALCON MOVEMENT - SOCIALIST EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL

Good governance refers to the set of organisational structures, practices, and values that foster transparency, inclusiveness, diversity, and accountability. It ensures that organisations create spaces for quality, meaningful, and effective participation at every level of their culture and decision-making processes. This includes taking into account and valuing the diversity of people, listening to and engaging marginalised voices in the decision-making process, and responding actively to everyone's needs. It is not only about having democratic structures in place but also about ensuring that these structures truly function in a participatory and responsive way.

The IFM-SEI resource⁹ on good governance is specifically tailored for young people and youth organisations. However, the principles it outlines are universally relevant and can be applied in any context where individuals seek to build organisations that are fair, transparent, and genuinely participatory.

⁹ IFM-SEI. Good Governance. Guidelines for Meaningful and Inclusive Youth Participation in Decision-Making Processes. IFM-SEI. Diversity and Inclusion Checklist. <https://ifm-sei.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Diversity-and-Inclusion-Checklist-EN.pdf>

1. Transparency

Every decision taken and implemented should be accessed by everyone, especially those who are directly affected by the decision.

2. Accountability

Responsibility towards people belonging to a specific category to improve the quality of society by addressing the challenges they face.

3. Rule of law

Implementing good governance by following the governing documents and ensuring that the governing documents reflect inclusive policies.

4. Equity and Inclusiveness

Ensuring justice for the community and offering spaces and opportunities for everyone to be able to participate.

5. Effectiveness and efficiency

A decision should meet community needs and address their expectations and experience.

6. Participation

Everyone has the spaces and opportunities to voice their opinions and contribute to the activities' development, implementation, evaluation and follow-up.

7. Consensus-oriented

Any decision-making process should be participatory and consensus-seeking, and if a decision cannot accommodate everyone's wishes, it should at least not harm anyone.

8. Co-operation

Openness to cooperate with other social partners and civil society organisations to increase the expertise of the organisations.

WELCOME KIT - SHARED BY THE EUROPEAN YOUTH FORUM (YFJ)

The Welcome Kit is a set of onboarding materials (a [checklist](#) and a [quiz](#)) designed to support new members navigate the YFJ network for the first time and find their place within such a large and dynamic organisation. It is distributed during the onboarding process for new members and then shared again every two years to support the integration of newly arrived representatives. Beyond being a practical resource, the Welcome Kit also plays an important role in fostering inclusion. It helps newcomers feel oriented, supported, and connected from the very beginning, preventing anyone from feeling lost or left behind as they join the YFJ community.



Find your places in the Youth Forum

Have you ever taken a quiz (MBTI, love languages...) to find more about yourself? Here you can take a quiz to find what kind of member you are!

This quiz will ask some (less than 10) basic questions about yourself and then it will give you recommendations and suggestions on meetings, newsletter and online spaces to join that fit you the most.

You might discover interesting things that will improve your member experience and increase your impact and growth. Let this quiz guide you!

european youth forum

Checklist for new representative and new organisation

Download it and check each item when you complete it

I. Updates

☐ MOs update - internal newsletter - [subscribe here](#)

☐ Hey news - external newsletter - [subscribe here](#)

☐ Social media: follow the Youth Forum on [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), [Youtube](#)

II. Members Portal

☐ Discover what the Members' Portal offers on the [Members' space page](#)

☐ [Create your account](#) and get access to the following information:

• Keep your contact update

• Read tutorial [materials for users](#)

• Read the [tutorial for admins](#) (fees and validations of contacts)

• Check **Calendar**

• Check **open calls** and register for **events**

• Get in touch with **Board and Staff contacts**

• Check **working structures and mailing lists**

• **Membership Benefits**: visits

☐ Join the **Policy corners** in the Members Portal: follow the groups you are interested in to receive notification on the latest updates and share your own!

• Education & youth work & volunteering & mobility

• Social and Economic inclusion

• Funding for youth organisations

• United Nations

• General YFJ updates

• EU and CoE

• Vote 16

• Sustainability

☐ Take our [Quiz](#) to find the places in the Youth Forum that fit you the most

IV. Youth Forum Relevant Resources

☐ [Strategic Plan 2021-2028](#)

☐ [Statutes](#)

☐ [Rules of Procedure](#)

☐ [Financial guidelines](#)

☐ [Code of conduct](#)

☐ [Child protection policy](#)

☐ [Youth Manifesto](#)

☐ [Policy Library](#)

☐ [Policy Programming](#)

☐ [Advocacy handbook](#)

☐ [Publications page](#)

☐ [Glossary](#)

☐ [Board - MOs contact system](#)

V. Support

• We organise online sessions (Youth Forum 100) to support newcomers twice a year

• You can always find all the information in the [Welcome Guide](#)

• You can always schedule an individual induction call or ask questions by email membership@youthforum.org

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TEN PRINCIPLES OF FEMINIST LEADERSHIP - SHARED BY ACTION AID

To support organisations in effectively **embedding feminist leadership** within their governance structures and everyday practices, ActionAid developed a set of **ten guiding principles**¹⁰. These principles are grounded in the **core values** of feminist theory (equality, accountability, inclusiveness, and collective care) and aim to translate them into **concrete organisational behaviour**. Rather than focusing only on individual leadership traits, ActionAid's framework encourages a **shift in culture**: it calls on organisations to challenge power imbalances, promote shared decision-making, and nurture environments where empathy, transparency, and solidarity are central.

1. Self-awareness - Feminist leaders need to lead with empathy and open minds. In order to do this, they work towards accepting their vulnerabilities, as well as recognising and valuing their strengths and those of others.

2. Self-care and caring for others - Feminist leaders take care of their emotional and physical well-being. Likewise, they encourage and support others to do the same, actively working towards a more flexible and supportive work environment, particularly for those with caring responsibilities.

3. Dismantling bias - Feminist leaders recognise that society gives certain individuals advantages that are not asked for or earned. They help to uncover and challenge these forms of discrimination in their day to day workplace practices and policies.

4. Inclusion - Feminist leaders create ways for everyone to be equally heard, respected and successful. They challenge themselves to build diverse and inclusive teams and to recognize and respond to different barriers to participation.

5. Sharing power - Feminist leaders work, together with their teams, to establish shared goals and trust and empower colleagues to share leadership in reaching those goals. Likewise, they trust and support those in positions of authority to guide them in the best interests of our mission.

¹⁰ Action Aid. ActionAid's Ten Principles of Feminist Leadership.
IFM-SEI. Good Governance. Guidelines for Meaningful and Inclusive Youth Participation in Decision-Making Processes.
IFM-SEI. Diversity and Inclusion Checklist. <https://ifm-sei.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Diversity-and-Inclusion-Checklist-EN.pdf>

6. Responsible and transparent use of power - Feminist leaders are clear, timely and transparent in making decisions, with appropriate consultation and in the interests of our mission. If involved in allocating resources and choosing partners, they ensure these choices promote organisational values and aspirations. They communicate decisions, and the reasons for them, openly.

7. Accountable Collaboration - Feminist leaders ensure that goals are clearly defined and mutually owned and hold themselves accountable for their individual and collective efforts to achieve them. They measure achievements by the contributions they have made to team success. They recognise and value successful collaboration, while addressing poor performance fairly but decisively.

8. Respectful Feedback - Feminist leaders seek, give and value constructive feedback as an opportunity for two-way learning. They practice continuous feedback and work to resolve conflict through active listening, timely intervention and promoting non-violent and respectful communication and behaviour.

9. Courage - Feminist leaders constantly aim for transformative change, seeking out new ideas and learning from mistakes, and encourage others to do the same.

10. Zero Tolerance - Feminist leaders call out any form of discrimination and abuse of power that they witness or experience in the workplace, and safely enable and support those around them to do the same. They ensure their own conduct is free from any form of harassment, exploitation and abuse.

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