

RFCDC – LEARNING ACTIVITIES BASED ON THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Tackling post-Covid-19 discrimination



Target group:
**Learners in primary
or secondary schools**

**TACKLING
DISCRIMINATION**



TACKLING DISCRIMINATION

An icon depicting a family of three: a woman on the left, a person in a wheelchair in the center, and a man on the right. They are all rendered in a simple, stylized manner with orange and white colors.

Tackling post-Covid-19 discrimination

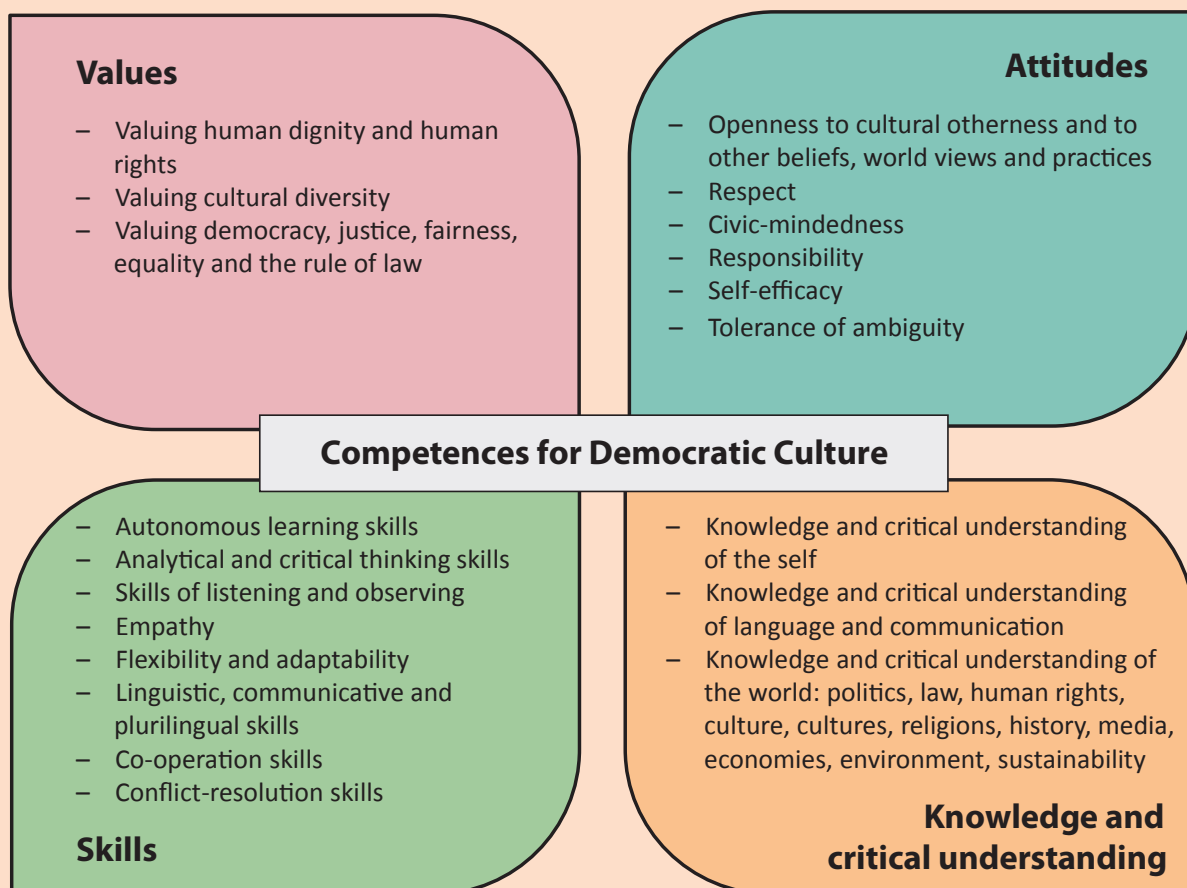
RATIONALE

During the period of the Covid-19 pandemic, many schools have been closed and learners have been forced to stay at home. There is a risk these situations have created social isolation or prejudices about families affected by the virus and forced to quarantine.

It is important to discuss these post-Covid-19 situations with learners and to use the opportunity to discuss how to promote equality and non-discrimination in the classroom and school context and how to prevent harassment, discrimination and bullying.



THE RFCDC COMPETENCES



COMPETENCES PROMOTED BY THE ACTIVITY

— Valuing human dignity and human rights; Valuing democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law; Respect; Tolerance of ambiguity; Empathy.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

— Completing this activity will help learners to:

- ▶ Recognise that specific rights of children should be respected and protected by society
- ▶ Appreciate that all citizens should be treated equally and impartially under the law
- ▶ Treat all people with respect regardless of their cultural background Intermediate
- ▶ Express respect towards people who are of a different socioeconomic status from themselves
- ▶ Express respect for religious differences
- ▶ Recognise when a companion needs their help
- ▶ Express sympathy for the bad things that they have seen happen to other people
- ▶ Express compassion for people who are being treated unfairly



DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY

1. Explore the definitions of discrimination, equality and bullying with the class, explaining and discussing these with the learners.
2. Discuss how the pandemic has affected people's everyday lives (their own situation, as well as the local and international situation).
 - ▶ Has coronavirus created tension and prejudices between people/groups/countries?
3. Organise a guided discussion to gather the learners' experiences of discrimination, unequal treatment, harassment, and bullying. This provides an opportunity to explore the everyday situation, values and attitudes of the group.
 - ▶ Do learners feel safe at school?
 - ▶ Do you think all learners are treated equally at school?
 - ▶ Can learners be themselves?
 - ▶ What could be done to improve the situation?
4. Give room for active learner participation. Here are some ideas for group work:
 - ▶ Collect proposals for the equality plan for the class/school and share them with your learner representatives or committee and the management of the school.
 - ▶ Create your own action plan for the class: What to do if...
 - ▶ Create posters, cartoons or slogans to promote equality and non-discrimination.
 - ▶ Organise a survey of learners about any of the issues in the class/year level/school and publish the results.
 - ▶ Create or update local policies based on the feedback coming from the learners.

MATERIALS OR RESOURCES REQUIRED

- ▶ Basic definitions of discrimination, (sexual) harassment, bullying, etc. Each school should have anti-mobbing and non-discrimination policies or rules (the general principle of equality and non-discrimination is a fundamental element of international human rights law), and at least some of this information should be available in these documents.
- ▶ Sufficient materials and advance preparation to discuss all of the following issues:
 - What is discrimination or unequal treatment?
 - The Council of Europe definition: "Discrimination shall mean any differential treatment based on a ground such as "race", colour, language, religion, nationality or national or ethnic origin, as well as descent, belief, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or other personal characteristics or status, which has no objective and reasonable justification" (ECRI Glossary, <https://rm.coe.int/ecri-glossary/168093de74>, page 5).
 - How to address discrimination and unequal treatment? (local policy)
 - What to do if you are bullied or harassed? (school policy)
 - What to do if you see discrimination or harassment? (school policy)
 - Links to the national/regional/school policy, if applicable.



When running this activity, it is important to take note of the following:

- ▶ Discrimination, unequal treatment, harassment and bullying are present in every school in one form or another. It is important to raise awareness about the various forms of discrimination.
- ▶ It is necessary to address and deal with any issues that are found according to the schools' guidelines.
- ▶ For teenagers, it is vitally important that their concerns and views are listened to, and that they have their voices heard and valued.
- ▶ Schools should encourage learners to be active members of the school community to improve the situation in various ways, and by giving them the possibility to participate in the development of the community.

REFLECTION ON THE ACTIVITY AND THE LEARNING OUTCOMES THAT HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED

— Discuss with the learners what they have learned from this activity and how it has affected their thoughts and feelings about discrimination and harassment for the future.

— Ask the learners to write short reflections on the following questions. Based on their answers create a feedback poster to display in the classroom:

- ▶ What is bullying? / What is discrimination? / What is unequal treatment?
- ▶ How does it feel to be bullied? / How does it feel to be discriminated against or treated unequally?
- ▶ What can you say to a bully? / How can you prevent discrimination in the future?

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www.coe.int/free-to-speak-safe-to-learn

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The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 47 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.