

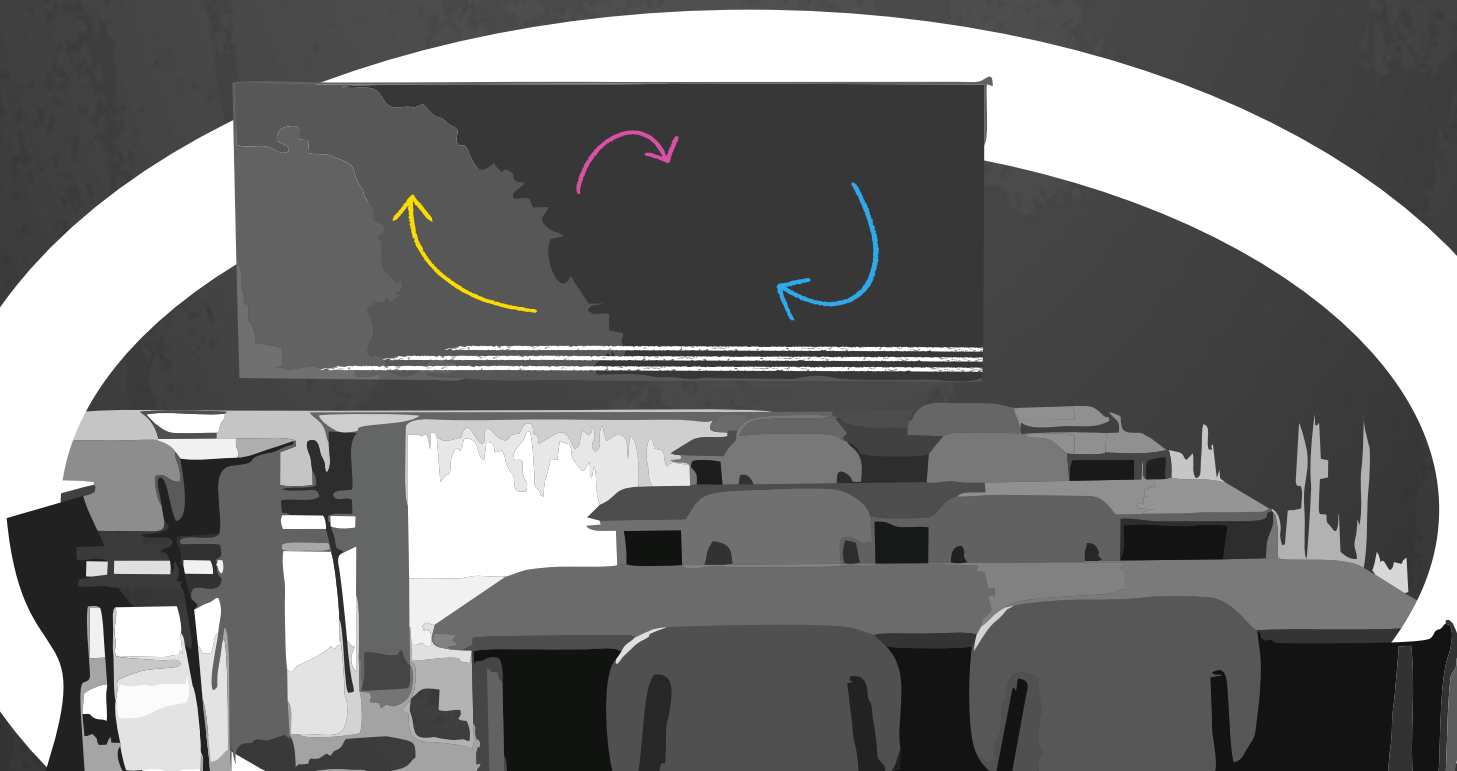


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# ACTIVITY AGAINST DISABLISM

**KITS AGAINST DISCRIMINATION  
OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS**



This educational material, included in the Virtual Inclusive Education e-Learning platform, has been developed by REDTREE MAKING PROJECTS in collaboration with SMALLCODES SRL, GRETA DU VELAY, INSTITUT 8 MAREC, IES ISAAC PERAL, ASOCIACIÓN DE GITANAS FEMINISTAS POR LA DIVERSIDAD, FUNDACIÓN POR LA EUROPA DE LOS CIUDADANOS, Y RIBALTAMBIÇAO, within the project “EDUCATIONAL INCLUSION INTO DIVERSITY, FACING SCHOOL LEAVING: Innovative methodologies to support ethnic minority students and stop hate speech in Europe”, cofinanced by the ERASMUS PLUS PROGRAMME of the EUROPEAN UNION.



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**This project has been funded with the support of the European Commission.  
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of the European Union

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# DEBATING ON FUNCTIONAL DIVERSITY

*Through the introduction of some sentences and concepts, encourage a group debate on functional diversity and theoretical approaches on integration and independence.*

**Level:** Easy. Secondary Education.

**Group size:** Indifferent.

**Length:** 45 minutes.

**Topics:** Functional diversity, disability, ableism, disablism, dysphobia.

**Objectives:**

- Knowing the various names that have been used and are still used when referring to people with functional diversity.
- Knowing the history of the discrimination experienced by people with functional disabilities.
- Assessing the theoretical concepts related to integration and personal independence.
- Valuing the rights of people regardless of their abilities.

**Materials:** Not needed.

**Preparation:** Organize the students for a general debate with open participation.

## **Instructions:**

After making a general introduction to the topic of functional diversity and discrimination against this group (ableism/ disablism/ dysphobia), the activity consists of generating an open debate on the issues listed under “resources”. Formulate each question allowing the students to reflect on it, and to develop the ideas that arise. You should direct the debate, personally inviting the students to intervene, while trying to get them to develop the questions that interest them most and those related to the objectives of the activity.

## **Sharing:**

Sharing will take place throughout the activity, highlighting the conclusions obtained after the debate on each of the issues raised regarding concepts like “normality”, “disability”, “personal independence”, “functional diversity”, etc.

## Tips:

It is convenient to be informed about the theories, applied terminology, and specific problems related to disability-functional diversity. It is recommended to read the article by Javier Romañach and Manuel Lobato [“Diversidad funcional, nuevo término para la lucha por la dignidad en la diversidad del ser humano”](#) (Independent Life Forum, May 2005).

It would also be interesting to have the [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#), approved by the UN General Assembly in 2006, as significant material to develop this activity.

About the history of the fight for the rights of people with functional diversity you can consult the article [“La batalla de los discapacitados por sus derechos en el mundo”](#).

## Variation:

The teacher can adapt the activity to the format that he/she considers most interesting for the specific student body, being able to work in groups or collectively, with people or groups in charge of defending certain positions (voluntarily or suggested), etc. The key is to arouse participation and interest in the issues addressed.

## Ideas:

In addition to discussing and reflecting on abstract issues, it would be good to know the life's reality of people with functional diversity. There isn't any person in the classroom with these circumstances, who can put a face and concreteness to the topic at hand, you can invite someone outside the classroom to do so.

If you have collaboration from people from outside, it would be positive if they also had experience in working with people with functional diversity and theoretical training in this regard, to transfer the students a more specific vision of this reality.

In order for students to easily perceive the implications of the concept of “functional diversity”, you can use the example of left-handed people, being in this case especially careful of not stigmatizing any left-handed person in the classroom. The adaptation of tools for use by the right-handed majority of the population means that left-handed people (between 10 and 20%) have problems when, for example, using scissors or a corkscrew, or starting a car with a key. These are different abilities that should lead us to adapt our environment so all people can develop as independently as possible.



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## Resources:

### DEBATE ON FUNCTIONAL DIVERSITY

We all have been or will be dependent at some point?

What is “normal”? and the “abnormal”?

Do we consider aspiring to perfection as something “normal”?

What does “handicapped” mean? And what do the terms “disability”, “invalidity”, or “dependent” imply?

Do you know historical examples of significant phenomena of discrimination or even persecution of people with functional diversity?

What is the difference between suffering from blindness and being blind? Or between not hearing and being deaf?

Did you know that left-handed people were considered disabled until the last century? Did you know that they were forced to use their right hand?

Where is the problem, in the ladder itself or in the person who cannot climb it?

Should the objective of working with people with functional diversity be to adapt them to society or is it society what we must adapt to them?

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities establishes as first principles respect for the dignity of the person, individual autonomy, and independence. What do you think about it?



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