INCLUSIVE PATHways TO PEACE

The Loop

Methodological guide

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AGENCY FOR MOBILITY AND EU PROGRAMMES

Udruga Studio B

Erasmus+
Enriching lives, opening minds.

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Introduction

The “Block H8 - Peace puzzles Toolkit” methodological guide presents a methodology and innovative tools to engage and empower youth with conflict resolution skills through game-based educational resources and aims to increase the quality of youth work by equipping youth practitioners and organizations with new skills, approaches and methods. It strives to promote common values such as tolerance, inclusivity, and understanding, ultimately contributing to building cohesive and peaceful societies.

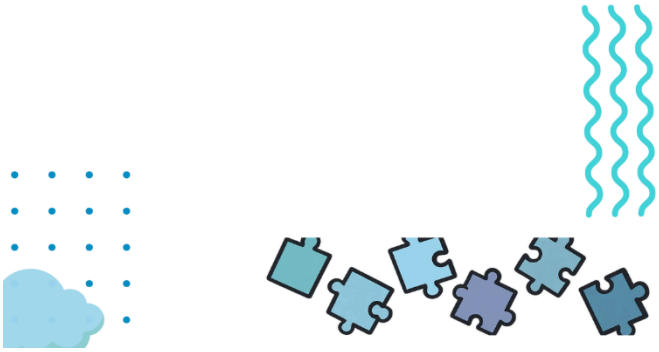
By providing Open Educational Resources (OERs) as a dynamic and interactive environment, we want to equip practitioners with hands-on experience that they can directly apply in their youth-focused initiatives, thereby contributing to enhancing the capacity of Youth and for Youth organizations by offering a practical resource for youth work.

This toolkit’s incorporation of digital elements, such as 360-degree photo/videos and Augmented Reality, provides a cutting-edge approach to non-formal education, available in English, Croatian, Serbian, Spanish, Greek and Turkish, ensuring that YPs, youth organizations, and training providers can use it in a way that respects diverse linguistic and cultural contexts.

Concerning the Youth, the overarching goal of these Open Educational Resources is to contribute to the enhancement of critical thinking and problem-solving, decision-making, teamwork, media literacy, communication and collaboration, leadership, professionalism, and strong empathy among young people, through active participation, in order to enhance conflict prevention and resolution abilities among youth.

Block H8 – Peace Puzzles Toolkit – Methodological Guide is a practical handbook for preparing and implementing 8 educational escape room activities focused on peacebuilding, human rights, inclusion, non-violent communication, emotional intelligence, digital safety, and the prevention of discrimination.

The guide provides detailed methodologies for each room. For every escape room, it presents the visual setup of the space, educational objectives, target group, accessibility and adaptation options, scenario, game objective, room layout, required materials, preparation process, the role of the Game master, gameplay flow, tips, hints, and debriefing questions, thereby providing a comprehensive tool for every practitioner in both non-formal and formal learning settings.



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Project context

"Inclusive pathways to peace, 2024-2-HR01-KA220-YOU-000279458" is an Erasmus+ KA2 *Cooperation partnerships in youth* project, coordinated by Association Studio B (Croatia) with partners from Serbia (Udruženje Svetlost), Spain (ASOCIACIÓN JUVENIL ERASMIAU), and Cyprus (Neolea gia antalagi kai katanoisi – Youth for Exchange and Understanding). The project aims to engage and empower 181 youth with conflict resolution skills through game-based educational resources and to increase the quality of youth work by equipping 130 youth practitioners with new skills, approaches and tools. The project promotes common values such as tolerance, inclusivity, and understanding, ultimately contributing to building cohesive and peaceful societies. After participatory action research and using creative gamification approach, partners co-created open educational resources - including interactive escape rooms enhanced with 360° and augmented reality elements - that support young people in building empathy, communication, and conflict resolution skills. By combining non-formal education and digital innovation, the project is strengthening the quality of youth work and contributing to more cohesive, democratic, and peaceful communities across Europe.



This guidebook was developed as an intellectual output within the project.

During its implementation, partners collaborated on the creation and testing of **educational escape rooms** focused on topics related to peacebuilding, conflict transformation, empathy, human rights, communication, and cooperation among young people. Through international collaboration and exchange of experiences, the project explored how game-based learning and highly participative educational activities can encourage active participation and meaningful learning among youth. The escape rooms in this guide were developed by **four national teams** of 10 youngsters and 2 youth workers, **tested** in an international setting in Šabac, Serbia in March of 2026, **further refined** based on feedback by the participants of that mobility, to finally be used in **local events** in Croatia, Cyprus and Spain. This approach enabled us to create a meaningful learning resource, that is both fun and educational for both youth and youth practitioners, with an immersive experience going much deeper than traditional learning methods.

This guide was created as a practical support resource for educators, youth workers, trainers, facilitators, and organizations interested in using educational escape rooms in their work.

We hope you'll enjoy using it as much as we enjoyed the process of its creation!

The Loop

1 Introduction

A) Context

"The Loop" is an educational escape room which focuses on the theme of exposure to marginalized groups which is a theme extracted from the participatory action research implemented by the national teams in partner countries in the earlier stages of the IPP project. The escape room is connected to the overall objectives of the project, as it provides an innovative way to discuss marginalization, discrimination and human rights. The escape room explores the history of different marginalized groups (*such as LGBTQIA+ community, migrants/refugees, and people with disabilities*) in the context of human rights in scope of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Disclaimer: This escape room touches upon sensitive topics including those based on sexuality, gender, ability and legal status (*i.e. migrant, refugee status*) as well as sexual health.

B) Visual presentation of the room

The room is divided into 4 areas by taping lines on the floor: one area represents the time machine and the three different areas represent the history of different marginalized communities / groups such as the queer community, as well factors such as migration and movement or different ways of communicating which may result in the marginalization of certain groups/individuals.

Area 1 is the time machine in which participants encounter a desk (covered in aluminium foil or shiny paper) which has a futuristic feel.

Area 2 (on the left) represents an LGBTQIA+ rights group's space which has a variety of posters and flags on the wall.

Area 3 is the "lost and found" section of an airport in Germany. It has three envelopes (which represent luggage/suitcases) next to each other. This area focuses on different causes for migration including brain drain, environmental reasons/climate change/natural disasters, and conflict/war/displacement.

Area 4 represents an exhibition on ways of communication. The wall in this area has images of symbols that represent some form of language and tool for communication. There are images of Egyptian hieroglyphs, sign language, Alphabet, numbers and emojis. This area invites participants to use sign language to uncover one of the clues.

C) Educational objectives

- Identify and gain information about certain marginalized groups, especially the queer community, migrants, refugees and people with disabilities.
- Develop an understanding regarding the prejudice and discrimination experienced by marginalized groups.

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- Raise awareness about the movement of marginalized groups through a rights perspective.
- Develop a better understanding about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- Develop critical and analytical thinking.
- Enhance their skills on collaboration and teamwork.

D) Target group profile and number

Age: 16-30

Group size recommendation: 6-8 participants

Group profile: Youth and/or youth workers interested in developing a deeper understanding of marginalized groups and their status within a human rights perspective.

Escape room difficulty: Medium

E) Accessibility & Adaptability

This escape room is designed with accessibility in mind, ensuring that participants with different needs, particularly those with hearing impairments and wheelchair users, can fully engage with the experience. All core elements, puzzles, and instructions are created to be usable without reliance on sound, and important information is always available in a visual format.

When setting up the room, facilitators should pay special attention to physical accessibility. Make sure there is enough space for wheelchair movement, avoiding narrow pathways or cluttered layouts. Key objects, clues, and interactive elements should be placed within comfortable reach (not too high or too low), and should not require excessive force or complex physical actions.

Flexibility is encouraged. Facilitators can adapt elements of the room depending on the specific needs of the group. The goal is not just access, but meaningful participation, ensuring that all players can contribute, explore, and enjoy the experience equally.

2 Step by step preparation

2.1 Scenario

Welcome aboard time travellers.

The Council has hand-picked you for a mission. Something quite peculiar has happened and you have to act fast. The articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights have slipped out of history!

If the Universal Declaration of Human Rights isn't found, people might forget their rights. If people forget their rights, they can't defend them. If they can't defend their rights, I don't even want to think about the consequences.

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You'll have to jump through different years, learn about different groups that have experienced different struggles. Some might be on very different paths than you. The articles are scattered among the different years, some might be in plain sight… for others, you might need to dig a little deeper!

Your mission is simple: Find the articles. Repair the declaration. Break the loop. Restore hope and resilience. Save humanity. Easy peasy.

2.2 Objective of the game

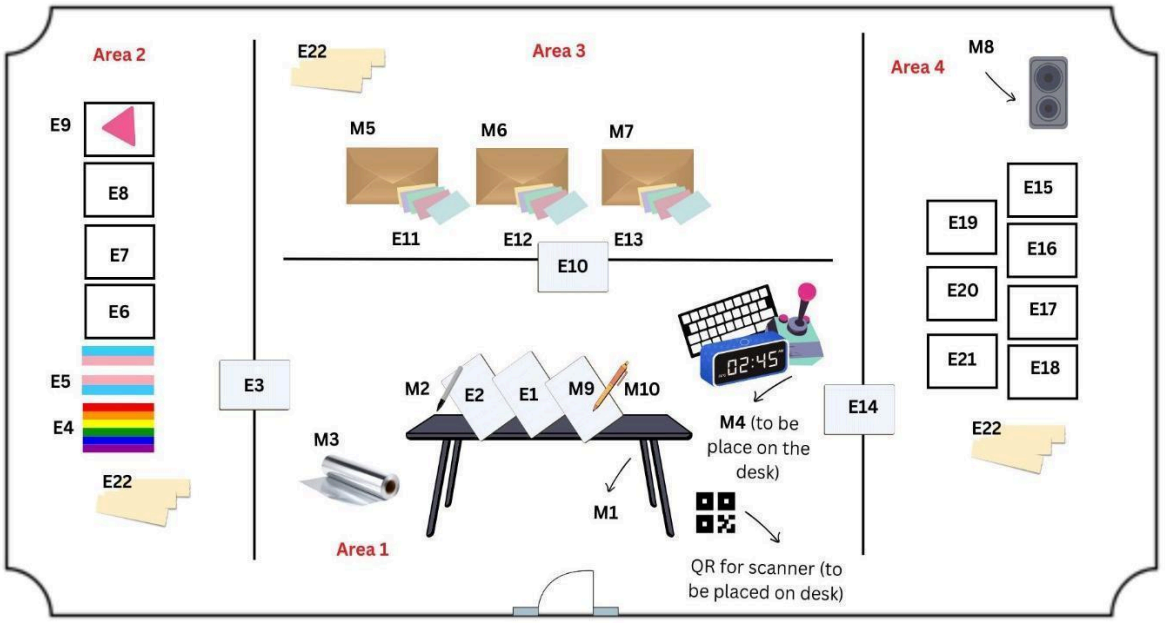
The Loop is an escape room which simulates the journey of time travel through different years. The goal is to collect information about different marginalized groups or different factors that lead to marginalization. The participants will visit the different areas to learn about different groups, locate the missing articles and reassemble the Declaration.

Through their journey they will find some of the articles scattered around, whereas some will need some further investigation. Through their journey they will explore milestones and important events for the *LGBTQIA+ community*; develop an understanding of different forms of *migration* through examples of the past, present and future, and develop an understanding of how different groups use different ways of communication.

Once all articles are gathered, the participants will gather in the time machine area to reflect and question on the function of human rights, the struggle to gain rights, and the function of human rights especially through groups who have a history of facing discrimination.

2.3 Room Layout

Depending on the shape and size of the room you will be using as the area of the escape room, the room layout will also vary. The most important thing is keeping the flow of the room relatively the same, e.g. keeping the first steps of the escape room towards the entry way and the final steps toward the back of the room. We suggest the following layout as an idea which can be adapted according to the space being used:



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2.4 The Materials

- M1. Table/desk.
- M2. Marker.
- M3. Aluminium foil/Shiny paper to cover the desk/table surface.
- M4. Digital clock, joystick, old keyboard or other items that could give a sense of a time machine to be placed on the desk.
- M5. Envelope.
- M6. Envelope.
- M7. Envelope.
- M8. Speaker.
- M9. Paper (for participants to take notes for clues)
- M10. Pen (for participants to take notes for clues)
- M11. Tape to divide areas in the room, and stick elements on the walls.

Additional:

The participants will need to have at least one smart phone among the group as they will have to scan a QR code for the scanner, and scan triggers. The QR code for the scanner should be placed on the desk in Area 1. The QR code can be found on the last page of the DIY Guide. You may also find the scanner at this link: https://theloopcyprus.netlify.app/

SCAN

In the above mentioned list, materials that can support the atmosphere of the escape room have been provided. However, feel free to add materials to contribute to enhancing the vibe of the room.

Internet connection will be needed to scan the QR code and triggers for AR and 360° elements.

Play background music to elevate the atmosphere of the room. You may find various options by searching key words such as “time machine”, “futuristic” and/or “cyberpunk” on online platforms or streaming services.

A timer can be displayed visibly in the room, or the Game master can have it on their phone, making sure to notify the players as time passes. The time to be set for this room is 45 minutes.

2.5 How to set up the room

The following steps you will have to do before every group of participants starts their escape room journey.

First make sure you have laid out all the materials that make up the room (M1-M11) according to the room layout requirements.

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Follow the next steps to set up the room with the game elements from the *Peace puzzles Toolkit* or the *Unlock Peace - modules for DIY production* so it is playable:

1. Make sure to divide the room into different areas using the tape (M11). Check the room layout above for a visual guide.
2. Area 1: Place a desk or table (M1) opposite the entrance.
3. Cover the surface of the desk/table with aluminium foil shiny wrapping paper (M3) to give a more futuristic feel.
4. Place the marker (M2), the Welcome note (E1) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (E2) and the QR Code for Scanner on the desk. Also, place an empty pen (M9) and paper (M10) on the desk which participants may use to take notes & make calculations while trying to solve the puzzles.
5. If available, you may add materials such as a digital clock, joystick, keyboard or other items (M4) for decorative purposes to contribute to the atmosphere.
6. Area 2: On the tape which divides Area 1 and Area 2, stick the notice which states “Journey 1: LGBTQIA+ rights group office, Amsterdam, Netherlands, Two decades ago” (E3).
7. Use the tape (M11) to stick the following posters on the wall: pride flag (E4), trans flag (E5), Freddie Mercury statue (E6), “Are you a friend of Dorothy?” (E7), “Human Rights are for everyone!” and “Love is Love!” (E8) and Pink Triangle (E9). If you have a pride flag and/or trans flag, you may use those, and attach the accompanying text to the flags.
8. Area 3: On the tape that divides Area 2 and Area 3, stick the notice which states “Journey 2: Lost & Found area, Airport in Germany, 2030” (E10).
9. Place the three envelopes with all the necessary elements inside them (M5 – E11, M6 – E12, M7 – E13).
10. Area 4: On the tape that divides Area 3 and Area 4, stick the notice which states “Journey 3: “Signs of Conversation”, Budapest, Hungary, 2013” (E14).
11. Place the Numbers (E15), Latin Alphabet (E16), Emojis (E17), Thumbs Up Emoji (E18), Sign Language Alphabet (E19), Egyptian Hieroglyphs (E20) and Morse Code (E21) on the wall.
12. In each area make sure to hide some of the missing articles (E22). Cut the articles on E22 individually, hide the articles in the different areas of the room. They can be stuck behind the material, on the floor, on the walls or under any props you have placed in the room.
13. You may place the speaker (M8) in any of the corners of the room based on the size and shape of the room.
14. The remaining articles (E23) should be cut individually and be kept by the Game master to be given when participants complete the corresponding puzzle or find the relevant clue (see “Specifics of the GM role in this ER” section for more information).

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Steps 1 to 14 are to be repeated before every group of participants enters the room; these will be your setup and reset steps to follow.

TIPS:

- When you install the game zone: make sure you remember the location of every clue! This will allow you to follow the progress of the participants during their game and give them the right clues.

- It is recommended to recount the material at the end of the session. It is possible that players have written on some or that they have accidentally kept some of the materials in their pockets.

3 Step by step implementation

3.1 The Game master

General Game master missions are to:

- Prepare all the game media, set up the room and then put it back in place;
- Welcome the players and immerse them in the atmosphere of their mission before the game;
- Follow the game in order to help them, give them clues or advice;
- Once the mission is over, the Game master is here to debrief with the players by going back over the highlights of the mission.

In the game space, we advise that the Game master remains a little bit away from the group in order to leave the necessary space for the players to evolve independently and perhaps be less tempted to ask for clues or judge the reactions of the Game master.

Specifics of the GM role in this ER:

The Game master welcomes the participants into the room by reading out loud the Welcome Note. They are a representative of the Council. The tone of the Game master should be concerned, yet formal, calm and collected.

The Game master will also keep some of the articles on them and provide them to the participants once they unlock the clues or find the answers. Here are the clues the participants must solve to receive Articles from the Game master:

- In Area 2: Once participants add all the dates mentioned in the elements and find that the answer is “2”, the Game master gives them Article 2 (E23).
- In Area 3: Once participants put words in the correct order, the Game master gives them Article 13 (E23).
- In Area 3: The participants find messages in Morse code which can only be solved by checking the Morse code sheet in Area 4 (E21). Once they

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correctly identify the article number by decoding the code, the Game master gives them Article 27 (E23).

- In Area 4: Once participants correctly identify that the signs in the 360 room indicate number 25, the Game master gives them Article 25 (E23).

The Game master should inform the participants every 15 minutes about their remaining time, if the timer is not visible in the room.

3.2 Introductions and instructions

Before starting the game, it is the Game master's job to introduce themselves and explain their role. The Game master is here in case participants need some help or are lost in the game. Explain the scenario if they still have some questions and explain about the timer.

Ask the participants if they have already played an escape game and if not, explain to them the purpose and mechanisms of escape games.

Inform the participants they have 45 minutes to complete the escape room.

Give the following instructions:

- Respect the Props and Decor: Treat all props and decor with care and respect.
- Do not use physical force, only mental. No clue is intended to be revealed by breaking elements of the room.
- Communicate Effectively. Clear communication is key to success. Make sure to verbalize your thoughts. observations and ideas with your team members.
- Listening to each other's perspectives is crucial for solving puzzles efficiently.
- Use your resources wisely. Utilize all available resources, including clues, tools and your teammates' skill and knowledge.
- Think creatively and think outside the box to find solutions to challenges.
- Stay focused. Keep your focus on the task at hand and avoid distractions.
- Concentrate on solving puzzles and progressing through the game to achieve your ultimate goal.
- Manage your time. Time management is essential. Pace yourselves throughout the game to ensure you have enough time to solve all puzzles and complete the mission before the countdown expires.

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- Stay positive and encouraging. Maintain a positive attitude and encourage your teammates. Support each other through challenges and celebrate your successes together.
- Seek help if needed. If you find yourself stuck on a particular puzzle or clue, don't hesitate to ask for hints or assistance from the Game master. They are there to help guide you and ensure you have an enjoyable experience.
- Follow safety guidelines. Be mindful of any safety guidelines provided by the Game master. Avoid running, jumping or engaging in any behaviour that could result in injury to yourself and others. No clue is hidden in a way that requires climbing furniture or moving heavy pieces of the set.
- Above all, remember to enjoy the experience! Embrace the adventure, immerse yourself in the story, and have fun working together with your team to overcome challenges and the escape room.

* TIP- It is better to give instructions outside of the play area, preferably in a quieter area where players can focus on what is being said by the Game master.

3.3 Hints and tips

During the course of the game the Game master **should observe** and give **some hints or tips** to the players. We have suggested some hints, at certain moments through the course of the play, depending on the situation, the Game master can give additional hints or tips. However, make sure you give players time to play and try to guess things, only give hints if asked or in case players are stuck.

Specific hints can be added here:

- The Game master can inform the participants that the complete Universal Declaration of Human Rights should consist of 30 Articles.
- The Game master should inform the participants that some articles are scattered around the area, while some can only be found by solving some puzzles and decoding clues.
- If the participants are struggling with decoding messages or calculating, the Game master can remind them about the pen and paper on the desk that can be used to take notes.
- If the participants require help with the triggers, the Game master should remind them that there is a QR code on the desk.

3.4 Course of the gameplay

1. The participants enter the room and see a desk with a marker, the Welcome note and the incomplete Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the QR Code for Scanner, pen and paper. As they enter, the Game master reads the Welcome Note providing context to the game.

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2. The participants start with Area 2 which focuses on the rights of the LGBTQIA+ community. They take a closer look into the poster and images on the wall to uncover the missing article from this area.
3. One of the images (the pink triangle) triggers a prompt when scanned. The trigger provides information about the pink triangle in queer history and provides an instruction on how to solve the clue.
4. The trigger explains that participants should find all the dates that are mentioned (1979, 1999, 1939, 1996) in the elements, add all the digits of all the dates until they reach a one-digit number.

   (1+9+7+9) + (1+9+9+9) + (1+9+3+9) + (1+9+9+6) = 101

   1+0+1=2

   Article 2!
5. When the participants reach the conclusion that the answer is "2", the Game master gives them the Article 2.
6. The participants move to Area 3 of the escape room which focuses on various forms of migration and movement. At this area, the participants look into three envelopes which include images, words and messages written in Morse code. The images give hints about different reasons why people migrate or seek asylum: environment/climate, conflict and unemployment/brain drain.
7. Here they will have to take all the words they found in the envelopes and put them into the correct sequence to complete the statement. Once this is done, the Game master checks if it is completed correctly and gives them Article 13. The correct order of the words is as follows: "*Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.*"
8. In the envelopes, participants will also find messages written in Morse code. They will be able to decode these once they move onto Area 4.
9. Participants move to the next area, where they encounter different signs and symbols such as the Latin alphabet, Numbers, Emojis, Sign Language alphabet, Morse Code, Egyptian hieroglyphs and a "thumbs up" emoji.
10. Participants will notice the Morse Code on the wall and that the messages found in Area 3 can be decoded by referring to this poster. If they manage to put the messages in the correct order and decode them, they will reach the conclusion that the message reads as "Twenty-Seven".
11. The Game master provides the participants with Article 27.
12. Once scanned, the "thumbs up" emoji takes the participants to a 360 room of an abandoned hall with signs around the walls.
13. On the walls of the abandoned hall, participants see different images of hand gestures. These hand gestures can be decoded from the sign language alphabet which is one of the posters in the actual room.

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14. They will refer to the Sign Language Alphabet poster stuck on the wall and try to decode which Article is being referred to. If decoded correctly, they will reach the answer that it is Article 25.
15. Once this has been solved, the Game master provides them a written version of Article 25.
16. In addition to the Articles that will be found through solving puzzles and decoding messages, the participants will find other articles scattered around the different areas within the room.
17. The participants go back to the starting point with all the information, they have gathered throughout the different areas.
18. They complete the Universal Declaration of Human Rights with missing articles they found throughout their journey.
19. Once the Universal Declaration of Human Rights has been completed, the participants are congratulated that they have restored the human rights and have successfully completed their journey.
20. The Game master will proceed with debriefing by using the questions listed below.

3.5 Debriefing phase

The Game master congratulates the players on completion of the escape room.

Elementary questions:

How do you feel?

Did you enjoy the game?

Did you feel under pressure with time?

Discussion:

A discussion led by the Game master based on the educational topic should follow. Together with participants, the GM should recap all that was important to learn from this educational escape room experience.

The GM can use the following questions to engage in the discussion about marginalized groups, human rights and discrimination:

- Did you know about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights before? What did you learn about it through this game?
- Do you think all of the rights are respected?
- Do you believe all people have access to their rights and are able to enjoy them? Who has access to these rights and who doesn't? Why?
- How can we contribute to ensuring all people enjoy human rights?
- How can we contribute to preventing discrimination?

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Taking a group picture: Game master helps the players take a group picture in celebration of completion.

Participants' feedback: Game master invites the players to give any additional feedback they might have regarding the experience

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Impressum

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