



DEVELOPMENT OF  
**CRITICAL THINKING**  
USING INFORMAL METHODS



**Critical thinking** is a human skill that can be developed throughout life. The development of critical thinking can be influenced by **external factors**: the education system, non-formal learning, participation in voluntary activities, etc.

However, you can **consciously** cultivate yours critical thinking: by looking for reliable information, evaluating facts. With the help on non-formal education, we can develop not only our own critical thinking, but also support our community in developing its critical thinking skills as well.





# DEVELOPMENT OF **CRITICAL THINKING** USING INFORMAL METHODS



In the second topic, we will tell you how to apply non-formal education methods in your community to develop human rights and critical thinking. Let's dive in!

In modern society, when information flows are huge, *the ability to critically evaluate information and develop skills to resist negative attitudes* needs to be developed.

There are **four key factors** to consider when developing critical thinking:



## IDENTITY

*With whom I identify myself, whether my identity does not contradict the norms of social justice and whether it does not violate the rights of other people.*



## EQUALITY

*Making sure that what I think and say does not contradict the principle of equality. Do I elevate one group of society above others? Do I value people according to certain identities? If yes, I need to address this.*



## JUSTICE

*Whether I can distinguish between stereotypical thinking and identify negative prejudices.*



## ACTION

*Does my identity enable me to treat other members of society fairly and equally? Do I take action to make sure others can enjoy their equal rights as well?*



Let's analyse the development of critical thinking by applying non-formal methods through a concrete example: **The establishment of multiculturalism and social justice**. This is a particularly relevant topic today, when even without leaving home you can experience the joy of learning about different cultures.



The **National Institute for Social Integration** has been using a non-formal method of human rights education for more than 10 years: **the “Human Library”**. This approach is based on the principle of creating a safe environment for members of different communities to get to know different social groups. Through individual conversations, stereotypes are broken and critical thinking is developed.



It is worth mentioning that there is **no precise definition** of the term human rights education. It is a **set of tools** to help people of all ages understand, exercise and care about their rights and respect other people's rights.

The human rights education program is a range of activities aimed at promoting equality in areas such as intercultural learning, participation and empowerment. No matter what specific methods of human rights education are chosen, the development of a human rights culture remains a key objective.

## **CERTAIN ELEMENTS OF A HUMAN RIGHTS CULTURE CAN DETERMINE THE GOALS OF HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION:**

**strengthening respect for human rights and human freedoms**

**valuing human dignity and develop respect for oneself and others**

**forming habits and behaviours that will help respect one's own and others' rights**

**ensuring gender equality and equal opportunities for men and women in all areas**

**promoting respect, understanding and appreciation of equality between different peoples, ethnic groups, religions, languages and other minorities and communities**

**empowering people to be more civically engaged**

**promoting democracy, development, social justice, community consensus, solidarity and friendship between peoples and nations**

**continuing the work of international organisations aimed at peace-building based on human rights values, international understanding, tolerance and non-violence**



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# Human rights education activities aim to develop feelings of self-confidence and tolerance, which are key parts of a human rights culture:



**respect for oneself and others**



**understand and express fundamental human rights**



**recognizing and respecting human rights in everyday life**



**appreciate and respect differences**



**acquire non-violent conflict resolution skills that respect other people's rights**



**developing the capacity to act and the skills to defend and promote human rights.**



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