



Work package 2

Digital storytelling and rights awareness platform

Module 4

Harassment and discrimination in society: stories, rights, safe choices

WP2 – Digital storytelling and rights awareness platform

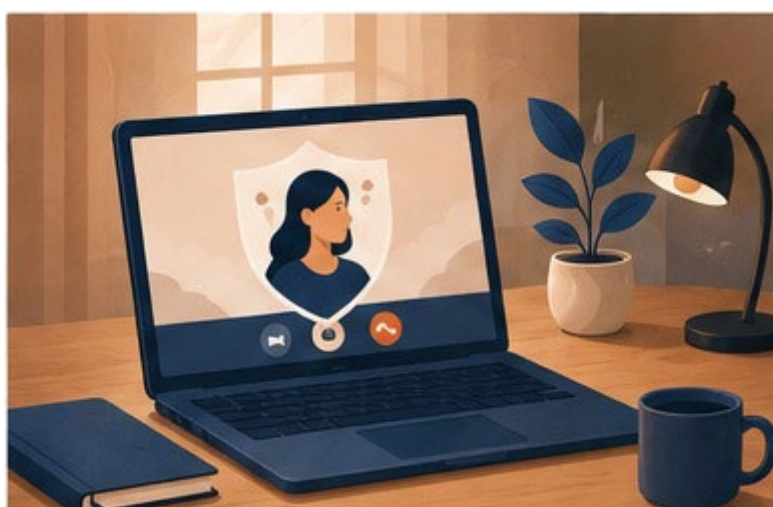
Training module title: Harassment and discrimination in society: stories, rights, safe choices

Target group: adult women (including disadvantaged women)

Estimated duration: 90 minutes

Delivery format: ☒ Online ☐ Facilitated ☐ Mixed

Can also be used in a facilitated setting.



Welcome Message

Welcome to this module on **harassment and discrimination in society**.

This course is designed to help you better understand situations that may feel unfair, disrespectful, or unsafe in everyday life, both offline and online. Through short stories, simple examples, reflection activities, and practical tools, you will learn how to recognise warning signs, protect your space, know your rights, and identify possible sources of support.

You do not need to share any personal experience. You may pause at any time, skip an activity, or return later.

Let's get started.



Learning objectives (max. 5)

By the end of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Recognise common signs of harassment or discrimination, offline and online.
2. Understand the difference between harassment and discrimination.
3. Identify simple first safety actions.
4. Choose a short boundary phrase that feels realistic for them.
5. Know where to seek support if needed



Module Contents

1. A short self-check
2. Two short stories
3. Understanding harassment and discrimination
4. What it can look like in real life
5. Warning signs and first safety steps
6. Rights, boundaries, and safe choices
7. Practical tools
8. Know your rights and get help
9. Wrap-up and final quiz

10. Closing message

Safety note (online)

This module is preventive and educational. It is not therapy.

You can:

- pause at any time;
- skip an activity;
- stop and come back later;
- keep your answers private.

You do not need to share personal experiences to complete this module.

Support contacts and help options are provided at the end.

Facilitation guidance (if needed)

For facilitated use, we suggest:

- Group size: 6 to 15 women
- Use general, neutral, and non-explicit examples.
- If emotions arise: acknowledge them, suggest a break, remind participants of their choice, return to general learning.
- Never ask participants to share personal trauma.
- If someone shares spontaneously, thank them, gently refocus the group, and remind everyone of the support resources available.
- Use "language of choice": "If you want to...", "Only if you feel safe...", "You can also just listen."

Before you start: a short self-check

Before you begin, take a moment to reflect. This is **not a test**. It is simply a way to think about what may be most useful to you in this module.

Choose the answer that feels closest to your experience.

1. When something feels uncomfortable, unfair, or disrespectful, I usually:

- A. Know immediately what to do
- B. Notice it, but feel unsure how to react

C. Often doubt myself or minimise it

2. If someone keeps pushing after I say no, I think:

A. That is normal

B. That may be a warning sign

C. I am probably overreacting

3. If I receive insulting or repeated messages online, I know:

A. At least one safe first step

B. I should probably answer

C. I am not sure what to do

4. If someone treats a woman unfairly because of who she is, this is:

A. Just a misunderstanding

B. Sometimes discrimination

C. Only rude behaviour

5. If I needed support, I would know:

A. At least one person or service I could contact

B. Maybe, but not clearly

C. Not really

You do not need to score your answers. This self-check is here to help you notice what you may want to focus on as you go through the module.

Introduction (500 characters maximum)

Discrimination means treating someone unfairly because of personal characteristics such as gender, age, origin, disability, religion, or sexual orientation.

Harassment refers to unwanted words or behaviours that make a person feel unsafe, humiliated, or uncomfortable. These situations can happen in public spaces, workplaces, services, and online, and they can affect how women move, speak, and participate in daily life.

Harassment and discrimination are common in public spaces, services, workplaces, and online. Some women report changing their routes, clothing, or social media use to avoid inappropriate comments or dangerous situations.

In the European Union, surveys show that **31% of women (aged 18 to 74)** have experienced physical or sexual violence as adults, and **55%** have been victims of sexual harassment since the age of 15. Eurobarometer also reveals that **17%** of Europeans have felt discriminated against or harassed in the past year.

This module transforms awareness into safe choices, boundaries, and support. In line with **the HERizon project** on women's empowerment, rights awareness, and protection.

6. Key messages (4)

- Your dignity is important.
- Discomfort is a valid signal.
- You have rights and choices.
- Help is available. You are not alone.

Section 1 – Two Short Stories

Read the two short stories below.



Story 1 – Layla (public space)

Layla is waiting for the bus at the end of the day. A man standing nearby looks at her and says, “With a skirt like that, you must be hot...” He laughs at his own remark.

Layla says nothing.

He moves closer and leans toward her: “Come on, smile a little, don’t be rude.”

Layla feels her stomach tighten and her shoulders tense. Her heart beats faster. Part of her wants to walk away, but she is waiting for the bus and the stop is crowded.

She thinks: “I just want him to leave me alone. I want to feel safe and respected here.”



Story 2 – Sofia (online group)

Sofia posts a neutral message in an online group: “I found this article interesting. What do you think?”

Someone replies with an insult about her origins.

Other accounts join the conversation with laughing emojis and mocking GIFs.

Sofia is alone at home, but she feels her face getting hot and her chest heavy. She feels ashamed, angry, and confused all at once. She thinks: *“I should never have written anything. Maybe I should just disappear from this group.”*

Then she remembers: *“I can protect my space. I do not have to accept this.”*

Pause and Reflect

For each story, ask yourself:

- What is happening here?
- How does the woman probably feel?
- What makes the situation feel unsafe, unfair, or disrespectful?

Remember

What may look small from the outside can feel heavy and serious to the person experiencing it.

Section 2 – Understanding Harassment and Discrimination

What is harassment?

Harassment means unwanted words, actions, attitudes, or messages that make a person feel uncomfortable, humiliated, pressured, afraid, or unsafe.

It may happen:

- in public spaces;
- in services;
- at work;
- in family or social settings;
- online.

Examples may include:

- repeated comments after a woman has said no;
- insulting jokes;
- humiliating remarks;
- repeated unwanted messages;
- pressure to respond, smile, explain, or stay engaged.



What is Discrimination?

Discrimination means unfair treatment because of who you are or how you are perceived.

It can occur when a person is denied a service, treated with less respect, excluded, paid less, or denied the same opportunities. Discrimination can be:

- **Direct** (clearly unfair treatment, for example: "We don't serve people like you.")
- **Indirect** (a rule that appears neutral but disadvantages some people more than others)

Discrimination can limit access to rights, work, education, housing, healthcare, and safe participation in society.

Common grounds for discrimination (EU Charter - Article 21) class :

- Gender
- Race
- Color
- Ethnic or social origin
- Genetic characteristics
- Language
- Religion or belief
- Political or other opinions
- Membership of a national minority
- Property
- Disability
- Age
- Sexual orientation

Key point:

- Harassment mainly concerns unwanted behavior and pressure.
- Discrimination mainly concerns unfair treatment and unequal access.
- These two phenomena can occur simultaneously in the same situation (for example, a woman who is ignored at a counter and also receives sexist comments).

Remember:

Harassment is mainly about unwanted behaviour and pressure.
Discrimination is mainly about unfair treatment and unequal access.
Sometimes both happen at the same time.

Quick check

Read each situation and ask yourself:

- Is this mainly harassment?
- Is this mainly discrimination?
- Could it be both?

Situation A: A woman receives repeated insulting messages online.

Situation B: A woman is treated unfairly at a service desk because of her origin.

Situation C: A woman is ignored in a meeting and also mocked with sexist comments.

There are no right or wrong answers.

The aim is to help you notice that disrespect is not always obvious and that some behaviours may seem normal even when they create discomfort or inequality.



Section 3 - What it can look like in real life (offline and online)

Harassment and discrimination can appear in everyday situations, both offline and online. It may include unwanted comments, pressure, sexist jokes, being ignored, repeated messages after saying no, or humiliating remarks on social media.

For examples :

- a man insisting on talking after a woman has said no;
- sexist jokes in a family or work group;
- a woman's idea being ignored until a man repeats it;
- repeated or insulting comments under a woman's photo.

These behaviours may seem small or "normal" to some people, but they can cause stress, fear, shame, anger, or insecurity.

Self-Reflection Activity – Respect / No Respect / Not Sure

Read these four situations:

1. In a meeting, a woman shares an idea. No one reacts. A few minutes later, a man says something similar and receives positive feedback.
2. At a sports club, a coach says to a woman, *"You're surprisingly good at this."*
3. On a bus, a man is taking up more space than one seat. When a woman sits next to him, he does not adjust his position.
4. Under a woman's photo on social media, someone comments, *"You still look good for your age."*

For each situation, choose your answer:

- **R** = Respect
- **NR** = No respect
- **NS** = Not sure

Then take a moment to reflect:

- Why did I choose this answer?
- What makes the situation respectful, disrespectful, or unclear?
- How might this situation affect the woman concerned?

There are no right or wrong answers. The aim is to help you notice that disrespect is not always obvious and that some behaviours may seem normal even when they create discomfort or inequality.

Identifying the problem

Read the three short scenes in this module.

For each scene:

1. Identify the words or actions that show pressure, disrespect, or unfairness.
2. Write one or two words about the possible impact: *fear, shame, anger, confusion, insecurity.*

3. Reflect: Why might this behaviour seem normal to some people?

There are no perfect answers. The aim is to help you recognise everyday behaviours that may cross a line.

Reflection questions

- What behaviours are often called “just a joke” but still hurtful?
- Why are they often minimised?
- How can you tell when something crosses the line?

Key message

Normal does not mean acceptable. You deserve respect offline and online. If something feels wrong, you have the right to notice it, name it, and seek support.



Section 4 – Warning Signs and First Safety Steps

Warning signs are signals that a situation may be becoming unsafe, disrespectful, or harmful. Some are subtle. Others already clearly cross the line.

Warning signs may include:

- pressure after you say **no**;
- comments that make you feel guilty or “too sensitive”;
- humiliating jokes;
- an aggressive tone;
- condescending attitudes;
- degrading images or memes;
- repeated unwanted contact;
- exclusion from a group;
- online attacks by many people against one person.

These signs matter, even when others call them harmless or normal.

A concrete example

You are in a video call. A colleague starts making jokes about your accent. Some people laugh. You laugh a little too, but inside you feel a knot in your stomach and heaviness in your chest. You think: *“I do not like this, but I do not want to create a problem.”* That discomfort is already a sign.

Activity – First steps and support

Choose **three warning signs** from the list above.

For each one, ask yourself:

- **What could I do first?**
- **Who could support me?**

Examples of first steps:

- say no;
- leave the situation;
- stop replying;
- block the person;
- stay close to other people;
- ask for help.

Support can come from:

- someone you trust;
- a helpline;
- a support service.

Remember

You do not have to wait until things get worse to take a small protective step.



Section 5 – Rights, Boundaries, and Safe Choices

Your Rights

You have the right to:

- be treated with dignity;
- be treated equally;
- be free from discrimination;
- protect your space;
- ask for help.

These rights matter:

- in public spaces;
- in services;
- at work;
- online;
- in everyday life.

Safe Choices

You decide what feels safest for you in a given situation.

Small safety actions are real actions. For example, you may:

- leave the conversation or situation;
- block or ignore the person;
- move closer to others;
- write down what happened;
- save screenshots;
- ask someone you trust for help;
- contact a support service.

What is a boundary?

A boundary is a line that protects your well-being.

A boundary can be:

- a short sentence;
- a refusal;
- a decision not to answer;
- a choice to leave;
- a choice to seek support.

You do not have to justify yourself in order to protect yourself.

Examples of Boundary Phrases

- *Please stop.*
- *I am not comfortable with this.*
- *Do not talk to me like that.*
- *I am leaving this conversation now.*
- *Do not contact me again.*

Sometimes the safest boundary is not speaking. It may be:

- leaving;
- blocking;
- not replying;
- calling someone;
- moving toward other people.

Activity – Choose Your Boundary

Choose one sentence from the list above.

Then ask yourself:

- Would this feel natural for me?
- Would I like to change the words slightly?
- In what kind of situation could I use it?

You can write your sentence down and keep it for yourself.

Remember

Your safety matters more than being polite, explaining yourself, or making others comfortable.



Section 6 – Practical Tools

Checklist: "Do I feel safe?"

- Do I feel respected?
- Is there pressure or teasing?
- Can I leave/block/stop this?
- Can I contact someone I trust?
- Do I need help?"

Decision tree: "If I feel uncomfortable..."

1. Take a break (breathe, step back)
2. Choose a safe action: set boundaries/leave/block/ask for help
3. Afterwards (optional): write down the facts / take screenshots / seek advice



Section 7 – Know Your Rights and Get Help

Everyone has the right to:

- Dignity – to be treated as a valuable human being.
- Equality and non-discrimination – not being treated unfavorably because of your gender, origin, age, disability, etc.
- Personal safety and protection from harassment, both offline and online.

These rights apply:

- at home and in family life;
- in public spaces and services;
- at work (including during online meetings);
- on digital platforms and social media.

Knowing your rights helps you report what is wrong and reminds you that you have the right to say "stop" or ask for help.

Harassment, threats, or discrimination are not "normal dramas" or "reality as it is." These are situations in which your rights and well-being may be threatened.

Where to find help

Support can be found at several levels. Adapt the examples to each country.

- Local services
 - Helplines for women or victims of domestic/sexual violence.
 - Free or low-cost legal services.
 - NGOs and women's organizations.
- Workplace channels (where applicable)
 - Trusted HR or manager.
 - Unions or employee representatives.
 - Internal or anonymous reporting tools (for cases of harassment, intimidation, or discrimination).
- Platform tools
 - Block, hide, or restrict accounts.

- Report comments or profiles.
- Use the security centers built into the app (privacy settings, word filtering, limiting who can comment).
- HERizon chatbot and rights guide
 - For information on rights, available options, and links to services.

You can combine several aids: for example,

- block and report on the platform;
- then talk to a friend;
- then, if necessary, contact a local service or channel at your workplace.

Mini Activity – My Help Map

Take a sheet of paper and write three headings:

People I can talk to

Services I can contact

Digital tools I can use

Write only what feels useful and manageable for you.

Remember

You do not need a “serious enough” case to ask for help. Early support is valid.

10. Reflection questions (for trainers/facilitators)

Use these questions after the session or during team debriefings:

1. What types of situations (on the street, in services, at work, online) came up most often in participants' responses?
2. Which parts of the module did I find most difficult to facilitate (e.g., role-playing, discussions about discrimination)? What support or training do I need?
3. How did I ensure safety and freedom of choice during discussions (camera options, chat, breaks, language)? What could I improve next time?

Wrap-Up

In this module, you explored:

- what harassment and discrimination can look like;
- how to recognise warning signs;
- how to identify first safe steps;
- how to choose a boundary;
- where to seek support.

The main goal is not to react perfectly. The goal is to notice earlier, choose more safely, and remember that your dignity and safety matter.

Final Quiz

Choose the best answer for each question

Discrimination means:

- A. A conflict
- B. Unfair treatment related to identity
- C. A joke
- D. Only physical violence

Correct answer: B

A warning sign could be:

- A. A respectful "no"
- B. Silence
- C. Normal service
- D. Pressure after a refusal

Correct answer: D

A safe first step could be:

- A. Accept the situation
- B. Leaving or blocking
- C. Sharing private information
- D. Arguing more

Correct answer: B

The limits are:

- A. A personal right
- B. Reserved for very serious cases
- C. Something you must always justify
- D. Rude

Correct answer: A

Support can help:

- A. Only the police
- B. Only in an emergency
- C. Even when you are unsure
- D. Only children

Correct answer: C



Closing Message`

Thank you for completing this module.

By finishing this course, you have taken time to strengthen your awareness, your choices, and your knowledge of support options. You do not need to have all the answers immediately. What matters is knowing that discomfort is meaningful, that your dignity matters, and that small safe choices are real choices.

You have the right to notice what feels wrong.

You have the right to protect your space.
You have the right to seek help.

You are not alone.

Optional annex – For facilitated use only

A. Facilitation guidance (if needed)

- Group size: 6 to 15 women
- Give general, neutral, and non-explicit examples.
- If emotions arise, acknowledge them, suggest a break, remind participants of their choice, and return to general learning.
- Never ask participants to share personal trauma.
- If someone shares spontaneously, thank them, gently refocus the group, and remind everyone of the support resources available.
- Use language of choice: *“If you want to...”*, *“Only if you feel safe...”*, *“You can also just listen.”*

B. Reflection Questions for Trainers and Facilitators

Use these questions after the session or during team debriefings:

1. What types of situations came up most often in participants' responses?
2. Which parts of the module were most difficult to facilitate?
3. How did I ensure safety and freedom of choice during the session?

C. Ethics and safety checklist

Before delivering the module, check the following points:

- The language used is respectful, non-judgemental, and non-stigmatising.
- There are no graphic or detailed descriptions of violence.
- Participation is clearly optional.
- Support resources are included and explained.
- Peer review or feedback from colleagues is planned.

For online delivery, also check:

- the private chat option is active;
- the facilitator knows how to mute or remove a disruptive participant if necessary.

D. Real-life micro-scenarios (for Practice)



Scenario 1 – Pressure in a Public Space

Title: *Smile, don't be rude*

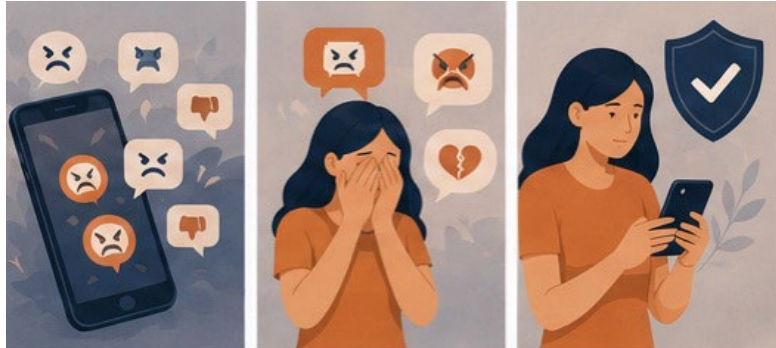
Lea is on a tram. A man starts making comments about her clothes: “*That dress looks good on you.*” She looks away. He moves closer and says louder: “*Hey, I was paying you a compliment. Don't you know how to say thank you?*” People around her hear the comments but remain silent. Lea feels her heart racing and her body tensing up. She wants to feel safe and reach her destination without further incident.



Scenario 2 – Refusal of Service / Stereotypes

Title: *We don't do that for you*

In a public office, Sofia comes in to ask for information. The staff member first serves other people, even those who arrived after her. When it is finally her turn, he speaks to her impatiently and says, “*People from your neighbourhood always come in with problems.*” Sofia feels humiliated and angry. She wonders whether she should remain silent or say something.



Scenario 3 – Online Harassment

Title: *Everyone is tagging me*

Lea posts a neutral comment under a news article. One user responds with insults. Others start tagging her and posting GIFs to mock her. Some send her private messages. She feels stressed, confused, and doubtful: “*Did I do something wrong? Should I respond? Should I delete everything?*”

E. Ready-to-Use Micro-Content

Short phrases that can be reused in the HERizon chatbot, visuals, or reminders:

- *Discomfort is a source of information. Take a break and choose a safe approach.*
- *You can say: “Stop. I don’t feel comfortable.”*
- *Online: block + report = protect your space.*
- *Small safe choices build confidence over time.*