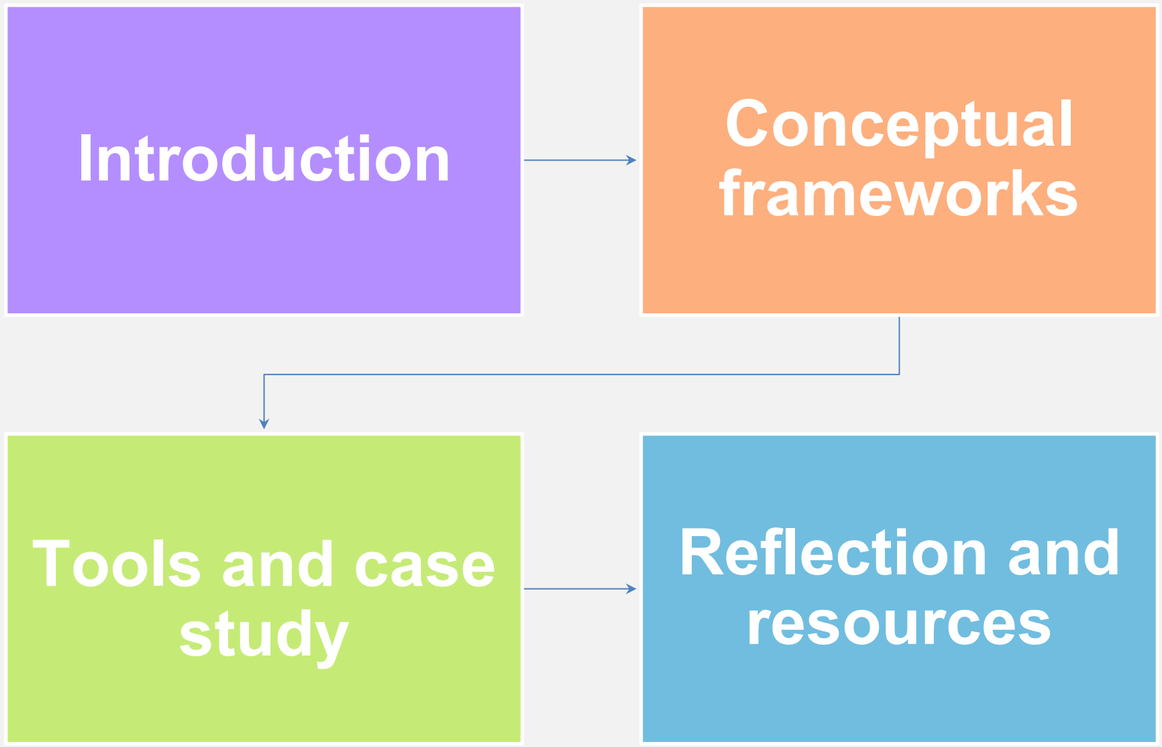
YOUTH in ROUTE

Routes for fostering sense of initiative and active citizenship among disaffiliated youth

Level 2/Session 5 – Intersectionality in Youth Disaffiliation

Co-funded by the European Union 2024-2-BE04-KA220-YOU-00276965

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Intersectionality in Youth Disaffiliation

Level 2 – Application | Module 5

Gender, Race, Class & Compounding Vulnerabilities in Youth Work

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About the Youth in Route Training Programme

Youth in Route is an Erasmus+ project equipping youth workers to address disaffiliation across Belgium, France, Portugal and Serbia. The training has 3 progressive levels:

- L1 Foundation – Theory & concepts of disaffiliation
- L2 Application – Practical tools & field strategies → **YOU ARE HERE**

Position of Module 5 within Level 2

Modules 1–4 gave workers practical tools. Module 5 asks: for whom do those tools work — and for whom might they fall short? An intersectional lens ensures no young person is reduced to a single identity or a single risk factor.

- Follows L2 Module 4 (Digital Tools for Engagement)
- Leads into L2 Module 6 (Case Studies & Simulations)

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Learning outcomes

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

- **Knowledge**: Define intersectionality and explain how overlapping systems of oppression shape specific young people’s disaffiliation.
- **Skills**: Apply an intersectional lens to a case, identify compounding vulnerabilities, and adapt support.
- **Attitudes**: Challenge single-axis thinking and resist reducing young people to one identity or risk category.



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Key concept

Suggested: Intersecting circles representing race, gender, class, disability, migration status



5 key concepts for this module:

1. **Intersectionality**: Coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989); the theory that social categories (race, gender, class, disability) do not operate independently but overlap and compound to create unique experiences of privilege and oppression
2. **Compounding Vulnerabilities**: When two or more risk factors interact to create a level of disadvantage greater than the sum of its parts (e.g., being a young woman + migrant + NEET)
3. **Single-Axis Thinking**: The tendency to address one dimension of identity at a time, which causes some groups — especially those at multiple intersections — to be overlooked by services
4. **Structural Discrimination**: Systemic patterns in institutions, policies, and practices that consistently disadvantage certain groups, regardless of individual intent
5. **Privilege & Positionality**: Awareness of one's own social location and how it shapes what we see, assume, and miss when working with young people.

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Interactive questions



Discuss in pairs after reading each scenario:

Scenario 1 – Brussels: Fatima (20), Moroccan-Belgian, NEET, undisclosed disability, keeps being referred to services that fit only one part of her identity. → What does a full intersectional assessment look like?

Scenario 2 – Ghent: Your digital outreach reaches mostly young men 18–22. Young women, LGBTQ+ youth, and youth with disabilities are almost absent. → What assumptions built this gap?

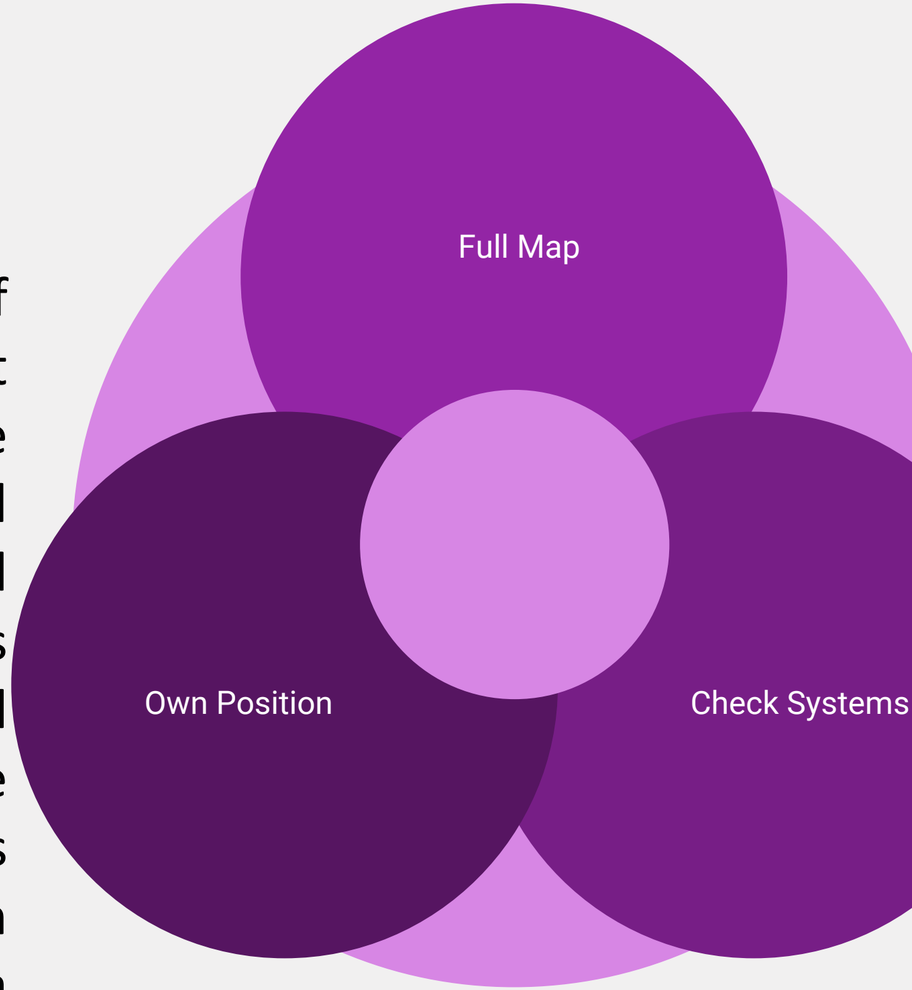
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Practical tips and field tools

Map the Full Person, Not the Label

is the practical application of intersectional thinking at the level of individual casework. It is a direct challenge to the intake logic of most youth services, which tend to record a young person through a single presenting category — NEET, homeless, drug user, migrant — and then route them accordingly. That label becomes the lens, and everything that doesn't fit it becomes invisible. The young person is reduced to the reason they arrived, rather than understood as a full human being navigating multiple simultaneous realities.Mapping the full person means deliberately asking: what else is true about this young person's life that shapes how they experience the situation we're focusing on? Not to produce a longer form, but to produce a more accurate picture — one that reveals which support pathways will actually work, and which will fail because they were designed for someone simpler.



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nvisible at Every Door – Supporting Young LGBTQ+ People of Colour in Brussels

outh organisation noticed that young LGBTQ+ people of colour were consistently absent from both LGBTQ+ services and ethnic minority youth programmes — falling through the gap between gned around single-axis identities.

e study: “CS-L2-M5-Intersectionality-Brussels-BE” | Key result: Tailored intersectional programme oung people in 6 months who had previously had no consistent service contact.



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Reflection



1. Think of a young person you struggled to engage. In retrospect, were there dimensions of their identity or experience that your service or approach was not designed to accommodate?

2. Where does single-axis thinking show up in your organisation’s intake forms, eligibility criteria, or referral pathways?

3. What is your own positionality as a youth worker? How might your social location create blind spots in your practice?

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Additional resources

1. VIDEO: Kimberlé Crenshaw – “The Urgency of Intersectionality” TED Talk (19 min)
2. ARTICLE: Council of Europe – Compass Chapter on Discrimination & Intersectionality
3. REPORT: Eurofound – “NEET Youth: Gender and Ethnic Dimensions in Belgium” (advanced)
4. QUIZ: Intersectionality & Compounding Vulnerability Scenarios (Kahoot, 8 questions)
5. TOOLKIT: EIGE – Intersectionality Toolkit for Youth Organisations (free PDF, eige.europa.eu)

See facilitator notes for platform links and access instructions

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mindshift

CEPORA
CENTER FOR POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Louis Lumière Chelles
Lycée des métiers du Commerce et des Environnements Connectés

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