

WALKING DEBATE: PUBLIC AND PRIVATE DATA

SAFETY > 4.2 PROTECTING PERSONAL DATA AND PRIVACY

TARGET GROUP	AGE GROUP	PROFICIENCY LEVEL	FORMAT	COPYRIGHT	LANGUAGE
All, Job seekers, Low literacy citizens	Adults, Elderly citizens	Level 1	Activity sheet	Creative Commons (BY-SA)	English, French

This debate aims to question the boundaries of privacy regarding data. Why, according to each player, should one sort of data be public while another type should be private ?

General Objective Knowledge acquisition

Preparation time for facilitator less than 1 hour

Competence area 4 - Safety

Time needed to complete activity (for learner) 0 - 1 hour

Name of author Nothing 2hide

Resource originally created in French

WORKSHOP DIRECTIONS

1 Introduction

The goal of this workshop is to organise a walking debate on issues related to public and private data. The objectives of a walking debate are to:

- Put participants in an active position encouraging questioning and reflection
- Inspire a critical, engaged atmosphere and group debate
- Deconstruct prejudices
- Create an avenue for meaningful response

Present a series of statements. At each assertion, each participant will have to take a position physically:

- To the right of the facilitator, if they are in agreement
- To the left, if they disagree
- No one is allowed to stay in the middle (no opinion) – physical movement encourages the choosing of sides and of arguments

After each statement, once everyone has chosen a position, ask a participant why they positioned themselves for or against (according to what chose). Next, ask someone from the other side to explain themselves and alternate as such until everyone has spoken. During the exchange, follow these rules:

- Participants may only speak once each.
- Arguments given should address the debate question and not the last thing said by the opposing camp. They should respond to each other directly.
- If a participant is convinced by another's argument they can change sides.

Facilitation tips: In this debate, there are no right or wrong answers – everyone is simply giving their opinion. Ensure participants are aware of this. The statements listed below are examples tested by our moderators. We therefore know that they are good examples for debate encouragement. This shouldn't stop you from coming up with your own ideas! However, we would advise you to choose statements that don't have a clear or straightforward response (in order to encourage the debate) and particularly to test them beforehand (with colleagues, friends, family) to ensure that they work well for this type of activity. For more information on personal data, we recommend you refer to the workshop '[Reflecting on Personal Data](#)'.

2 The debate

Once participants have understood the idea of a walking debate – and that they can change sides during the debates, during the same question, even without waiting for the end of an argument – you can start! Read out the statements one by one. Don't force participants to speak — this may make them feel uncomfortable which means they may not move at all. A better idea would be to ask for a volunteer to explain their position and let the debate progress naturally. Leave participants respond, move the debate on if necessary, and allow the shyer amongst the group to speak where necessary.

- During the 00s, the parliamentary expenses scandals exploded in the UK, culminating in 2009, when a large number of resignations, sackings, de-selections and retirement announcements together with public apologies and the repayment of expenses. The Prime Minister Gordon Brown, for example, claimed £12.500 in public money for gardening expenses. In Europe **[or insert your country here]**, claimed expenses of high level public servants should be made public.
- Many people die in incarceration **[look up estimates for your country]**. In many of these cases, the causes remain unknown. The number of deaths and their causes should be made open data.
- The European Union implemented an [emissions trading system](#) in order to discourage use of fossil fuels in an economically sustainable way. Essentially, every company is permitted to produce a certain amount of emissions. If they pass their threshold, they can buy more 'emission allowances' from others who have not reached their limit. The names (and all other relevant information) of companies who pass their emission threshold should be made public.
- Many not-for-profit organisations cannot survive without spontaneous donations through methods like crowdfunding campaigns, particularly from companies or private citizens. Organisations that ask for donations should make their finances public.
- How many times have we seen politicians fail to appear in parliamentary meetings? What was the reason for their absence? Many questions like these can be asked, but answers are often unforthcoming. Members of parliament should be obliged to make their schedules public while they are absent from meetings. **[Adapt this to your own national political context]**
- On Facebook, if (and only if) a user flags an account, they can be scrutinised by the platform's team, and, potentially, suspended. In cases where accounts have been suspended due to actions (conversations, friend requests, posts, etc.) links with terrorism, the names of these accounts should be made public.

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Going further

Participants may be interested in learning more about public data. They can check [Google Public Data Explorer](#) and the EU's [Open Data Portal](#), among others.