Race to the top

Introduce topics of privilege and disparity within Western societies

Materials: A handout of the Status/steps matrix (see below), a role card to each participant, two small papers written 'lucky you - one step forward' or 'too bad - two steps back'

Step-by-step

Preparation
Assign each participant a card that will display a set of 8 social statuses. The facilitator will create the cards by writing down casually one possible condition for each status represented in the status/steps matrix (see below) or have printed the status/steps matrix marked individual for each participant.
Place the participants side by side at a starting line leaving enough room for about 20 steps forward.

Handout
The Status/steps matrix:

Status ↓ /Privilege→	None	Weak	Strong
Citizenship	Undocumented	Non-citizen	Citizen
Sexuality	Non-hetero	-	Hetero
Gender	Trans-man; Trans-woman	Cis-woman	Cis-man
Ability	Significant disability	Some disability	Able-bodied
Skin color	Non-white	-	White
Neuro-diveristy	Significant neuro-divergence	Neuro-atypical	Neuro-typical
Language	Doesn't speak Danish	Danish second language	Native Danish speaker
Family class	Poor	Middle-income	Rich

Civil Connections
Building robust communities

FR*i*
Fundamental Rights*initiative*

Rules - explain to participants

The Race to the Top is a hustle to be on top of the capitalist society - to move ahead of the others. Like any healthy capitalist society, there are two major elements that determine the winner: luck and privilege.

Privilege is not something that you can earn. You are born privileged. Therefore, each participant will be randomly assigned a privilege card, listing 8 different statuses, linked to a different condition (see table above).

The facilitator will ask a question, structured like this: "if you can do this action, then take a step". The participants will take the steps according to the conditions that they have on their cards and their own sensitivity.

Randomly the facilitator will offer the notes of 'Lucky you' or 'Too bad' hidden in each hand to random participants to enact the element of luck or bad luck.

Whoever wins the race gets nominated as the top capitalist of the group!

Group questions

List of possible questions for the game:

- "If you safely can walk alone at night take a step"
- "Take a step if you can be out in public without anybody staring at you"
- "Take a step if you don't have to explain where you're from every time you meet someone new"
- "If you can use the stairs take a step"
- "If you can take a step, take a step"
- "If you can read the ingredients on the chips' package take a step"
- "Take a step if you can afford to not work"
- "Take a step if you only buy Apple"
- "Take a step if nobody ever called you names"
- "If you are not ashamed of who you are, take a step"
- "Take a step if people never laughed at your weird behavior"
- "Take a step if you never have to report to borgerservice"
- "Take a step if you can walk down the street holding the hand of your partner"

- "Take a step if people pronounce your name correctly the first time"
- "Take a step if you have a masters degree"
- "Take a step if your parents like your partner"
- "If you do not have to ask people to use your correct pronoun, take a step"
- "If you can travel anywhere without fear of being assaulted, take a step"
- "If you always receive health care when you need it, take a step"
- "If your parents can vote, take a step"
- "Take a step if you don't need any special permit to travel out of the EU"

If your audience is young adults, add these:
- "Take a step if writing your name on your cv is a good thing"
- "Take a step if leaving your picture on your cv is a good thing"
- "If you can go to private healthcare take a step"
- "If you can vote, take a step"

Evaluation

Evaluation of the activity can be done at the end of the race, addressing especially the frustration that can arise when the participants see someone have an unfair advantage at the beginning, or when luck is particularly against them. It can be a valuable moment to explain how privilege favours people in unfair ways, and privilege is distributed randomly, already from when people are born.