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Social Report

UNIQUE

"Enabling educators to become aware of the real-life challenges faced by the target group and leading the educators towards setting personal learning objectives"

This Social Report is a result of the action research work of six partner organisations from five EU countries conducted as part of an Erasmus+ project called UNIQUE. It presents the outcomes of an in-depth exchange with self-advocates such as learners who identify as LGBTQIA+, educators and other experts in Germany, France, Italy, Spain and Bulgaria. A useful Glossary of terms is proposed to facilitate a shared understanding of the challenges the learners face.

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About the Coaching Circles methodology

The Coaching Circles are, next to the desk research, an instrument the partnership used to assess the situation in the education sector with regards to people who identify as LGBTQIA+ in each country. They helped us identify specific challenges as well as demands the target groups have, when it comes to creating and sustaining queer-friendly, intersectional learning spaces. Said target groups are learners, trainers, and LGBTQIA+ experts like activists or researchers. The outcomes have influenced the Awareness Tool and the Learning Pathways developed within the UNIQUE project.

Coaching Circles: conceptual background

1. **Coaching Circles are a tool created with Theory U:** Theory U (Otto Scharmer) wants to enable people to address social challenges in a more conscious, intentional and strategic way, while enhancing the idea of collective intelligence and support. Coaching Circles were originally a tool for intervention in educational and social work contexts. They are now an instrument in many professions and settings where individuals who are equal in experience and status, come together and collectively share (their personal) dilemmas, reflect on them and find ways to resolve them.
2. **Coming together to find solutions:** Coaching Circles are an initial moment, in which participants gather together with joint perspectives and purposes, while sharing the common intention of making a difference in a situation that really matters to them and to their communities. The ability of deep listening is crucial in order to address personal and collective challenges.

The use of Coaching Circles for UNIQUE

Coaching Circles guide a team or a group of peers through a process in which one person ("case giver") presents a case, and a group of peers or team members help resolving the situation as consultants. In our project, this setup was used to allow participants to generate new ways to approach a challenge or question. It sustained the conversation and stimulated various reactions within the whole group. There are very few rules and roles and, in order to allow all participants to freely express, share and react, a specific management of time is proposed. All our 16 Coaching Circles took place in person in 5 different countries.

The moderators of the Coaching Circles followed an agreed procedure and duration of activities:

1. Greetings (approx. 5 min)
2. A scenario/impulse is given (5-10 min)

3. Silence (3 min)
4. Reflection (5 min)
5. Generative Dialogue (20 min, or longer if everybody is up to it)
6. Summary (10 min)
7. Thanks and feedback on the session (10 min)

The data included in the Social Report

- Date of the Coaching Circle
- Role of each participant + Profession (if relevant)
- Short introduction of the case
- Notes of relevant statements
- Notes of relevant demands/solutions to case given

Context information

- The Coaching Circles were conducted in 5 EU countries: Bulgaria, France, Germany, Italy and Spain. While the data cover mainly the education systems of the 5 countries, four of the Coaching Circles identified experiences reflecting also the reality in other countries like: Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Denmark, Ecuador and the UK.
- In total, 16 sessions were conducted between 5th February and 11th March 2024
- In 8 of the Coaching Circles, issues relating to intersectional discrimination were identified in addition to LGBTQIA+ issues. These included: racism, gender, ethnicity (Roma), socio-economic situation, appearance, religion (Judaism)
- Three different types of participants were invited to separate Coaching Circles:
    - Experts on LGBTQIA+ issues (5 sessions)
    - Education Experts (6 sessions)
    - Learners identifying as LGBTQIA+ (5 sessions)

Glossary of terms

As soon as one starts looking closer at sexual orientation, gender identity and related freedom of personal expression, it quickly becomes evident that it is important to agree on a common understanding of various terms describing the reality of those identifying as LGBTQIA+, but also those with opposing views.

Before we proceed with the findings from the Coaching Circles, for the purposes of this project, our readers are invited to familiarise themselves with the following terms and to refer back to them as they read to avoid any misinterpretation of the data.

**** A more detailed glossary was later developed in the Learning Pathways – Module 1 with reference to Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression and LGBTQIA+ terms specific for different regions across the world.***

-fluid

(English for 'liquid') as a suffix for gender identities and sexualities expresses that identity or sexuality is not fixed but can change.

Examples include genderfluid for someone whose gender identity changes, or acefluid for someone who sometimes identifies as asexual but at other times as something else.

A-

is a prefix meaning "not" or "none." It can relate to sexuality (e.g., "a_sexual"), romantic orientation (e.g., "a_romantic"), or gender (e.g., "agender"). For many people, they are spectra.

Ace

A shorthand for asexual. The asexual community commonly uses 'ace' as a self-identifier and umbrella term.

AFAB

The abbreviation stands for "assigned female at birth," indicating being assigned the female gender at birth.

Individuals who are intersex, transgender, or non-binary and were assigned female at birth may use this term to express that they do not fully or only partially identify with that assignment.

AMAB

The abbreviation stands for "assigned male at birth," indicating being assigned the male gender at birth.

Individuals who are intersex, transgender, or non-binary and were assigned male at birth may use this term to express that they do not fully or only partially identify with that assignment.

Ally

A person who is not personally a member of a marginalized group, but actively supports and advocates for it. They are actively working to end intolerance, raising awareness, and leverage their position as someone not belonging to the marginalized group to advocate for the equality of discriminated individuals.

Bi+sexuality

Umbrella term in activist and scientific contexts for all sexual orientations in which a person can be sexually attracted to people of two, multiple, or all genders.
Thus, under Bi+sexuality fall Bisexuality, Pansexuality, Omnisexuality, Multisexuality, and Polysexuality.

Cis

Is used to express that a person's gender aligns with the one assigned to them at birth based on their genitals.
Similar to 'trans,' 'cis' functions as an adjective, placed before the noun, for example, 'cis man.'

Coming Out

involves recognizing one's gender/sexual orientation (internal) and sharing it with others (external).
External coming out is a lifelong process, often needing repetition in new social circles.

FLINTA

The acronym signifies welcome for Female Individuals, Lesbians, Intersex, Non-binary, Trans, and Agender individuals.
Issues arise when it's equated with 'women,' or 'all individuals I perceive as women,' leading to the exclusion of many people who would otherwise be included.

Gender

At a scientific level, gender refers to the socially constructed dimension of identity, while from an activist and personal standpoint, it encompasses an individual's gender identity. In this

context, gender identity denotes a person's personal understanding of their gender and associated role.
Societally, gender serves as the framework by which we classify diverse concepts—like social status, gender expression, societal roles, life plans, and sexuality—into the categories of masculinity and femininity.

Genderqueer

A term for individuals not fitting into the gender binary norm. It can describe the gender identity of those identifying as both a woman and a man (simultaneously or alternately) or neither a woman nor a man.
It's not distinctly separate from the terms 'genderfluid' or 'non-binary.

Heteronormativity

If a society is based on this concept, the expectation is that everyone conforms to being cisgender and heterosexual. It assumes that each person has only one of two genders, either male or female, and that this gender can be determined at birth based on genitalia.
Additionally, it presupposes that these genders fundamentally differ and are romantically and sexually oriented towards each other. Therefore, (cis) women are expected to be attracted only to (cis) men, and vice versa.
Deviations from this norm, such as queer and polyamorous relationships, as well as trans individuals, are rendered invisible and/or subject to discrimination.

Homosexuality

Homosexuality refers to a sexual orientation where individuals are attracted to their own or a similar gender. Gay is a term commonly used by homosexual men, while homosexual women identify as lesbian.
Many reject the term "homosexual" because it was primarily used in a medical context during its origin.

Inter*

An attribute by individuals whose physical characteristics (such as genitalia or chromosomes) cannot be clearly assigned to the medical norm of 'distinctly' male or female bodies but exist along a spectrum in between.

Surgery on children to align with normative genders, often leads to health and psychological challenges.

Intersectionality

means that various societal structures are interconnected, such as gender, sexuality, origin, culture, religion, and social status.
This implies that different forms of discrimination, such as racism, queerphobia, and ableism, are interconnected and must be considered within these contexts.
An example is a queer person of colour with a disability, facing challenges stemming from the intersections of their sexual orientation, racial identity, and disability status. Understanding and addressing these overlapping aspects is essential for a comprehensive approach to social justice and equality.

LGBTQIA+

This combination of letters (which also exists in other variations, see below) attempts to encompass all identities within the queer spectrum. Since that's not entirely possible, the '+' is added at the end.
The letters in LSBAATNIQQPR+ represent: lesbian, gay, bi+sexual, asexual, aromantic, trans, non-binary, intersex, queer, questioning, and polyamorous individuals.
As an alternative to listing the letters, the term 'queer' can also be used.

Polyamory

describes a way of loving and navigating relationships. Identifies individuals who fall in love with more than one person simultaneously and/or desire romantic, queerplatonic, and/or sexual relationships with more than one person.
Polyamory is built on open and honest communication.

Privileges

are benefits and opportunities automatically available to individuals in a majority or non-marginalized group. These are often taken for granted and come at the expense of marginalized groups.
Many individuals with such benefits and opportunities are unaware that members of marginalized groups do not have these.
Examples in regard to heteronormativity: marriage rights, adoption rights, family acceptance

Queer

This term labels or the entire queer community.
Additionally, Queer Studies is an academic field.
In English, 'queer' was long used as a derogatory term, especially towards gay men. Similar to many other terms originally meant as insults, queer individuals have reclaimed and redefined the word positively.

TERF

stands for trans-exclusionary radical feminist, representing feminists who exclude trans individuals. They assert a binary view of gender based on physical traits, prioritizing this over trans people's self-identification.
They are notably trans-misogynistic, refusing to recognize trans women as women, excluding them from women's spaces. Also, they often claim that trans men and non-binary afab individuals betray feminism or simply seek to escape discrimination as women.
As they engage with alt-right movements (because sharing some ideas and goals) some assess them as a threat to democratic societies.

“Female body”

A 'female body' is commonly thought of as having specific reproductive organs like a vulva, uterus, and ovaries. A more inclusive definition would consider female bodies as those belonging to women, regardless of being trans or cis, intersex, or dyadic. It's important to note that not all individuals with ovaries are women, and not all women have ovaries. Therefore, describing reproductive organs as 'female sex characteristics' lacks precision.

“Male body”

The term 'male body' is often associated with specific anatomical features such as a penis and testes. An inclusive definition would view male bodies as those of men, irrespective of being trans or cis, intersex, or dyadic. It's crucial to recognize that not all individuals with penises and testes are men, and not all men have these organs. Hence, describing these anatomical features as 'male sex characteristics' lacks precision.

trans

Individuals whose gender differs from the one assigned at birth. They may identify as binary (man or woman) or non-binary.
The term is commonly used as a self-identifier, so it should not be imposed on others.
Functions as an adjective, placed before the noun.

Label

is a term individuals use to describe their sexuality and/or gender (e.g. lesbian, gay, bisexual, asexual, trans, intersex, non-binary, and queer).
They facilitate shared language for discussing feelings and experiences related to gender and sexuality.
They are meaningful when self-determined but not when imposed on others without consent.

Tone Policing

is a deliberate or unconscious discussion strategy and diversion tactic where the focus shifts from the content of what is said to the tone used by a person. The intent is to devalue arguments or statements, shut down discussions, and silence individuals.
Marginalized groups, including Black people, People of Colour, women, those with disabilities, queer individuals, plus-size individuals, poor individuals, or migrants, are particularly impacted by this tactic.

Coaching Circles Outcomes

Based on the 16 Coaching Circles conducted in Germany, France, Italy, Spain and Bulgaria, we have categorised the outcomes into 4 axes progressing from understanding LGBTQIA+ realities in the classroom (FACTS) to proposing a more inclusive learning environment with proactive measures (ACTS).

The following pages offer an overview of what was mentioned and proposed during the Social Circles. The authoring partnership offers short summaries of the findings, but does not offer any commentary, judgement or interpretation. The only editing relates to presentation and grouping of information gathered by the facilitators. The gathered information will be used to inform the Learning Pathways proposed as part of the UNIQUE project.

AXIS 1: LGBTQIA+ identities in the classroom, terms and life-realities

Talking about Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in an educational setting

Summary: LGBTQIA+ issues are first discussed among peer students. Teachers willing to engage lack support from administration. Addressing topics before 18 is crucial. "Don't ask, don't tell" is common to avoid conflict. Access to schools is a challenge for experts. Some teachers fear being outed. Cultural sensitivity leads to teacher silence. Complaints are resolved quietly. Schools rarely address LGBTQIA+ topics. Higher education treats LGBTQIA+ issues academically. STEM ignores

- 1st instance of talking about LGBTQIA+ issues are peer students.
- When teachers are willing to engage in discussing sexual orientation and gender identity, they lack support from or even fear the stance of the school administration.
- The topic should be addressed before the age of 18 years.
- Instances of “don’t ask, don’t tell” to avoid the issue altogether.
- One of the biggest challenges for the experts working on LGBTQIA+ topics is the access to schools, but this is changing and could be done by approaching the topics about sensitivity, emotional intelligence, tolerance, etc.
- Some teachers also prefer not to be openly out as they fear it might discredit their teaching as learners might focus on their individuality, rather than on the taught subject.
- In culturally sensitive areas, teachers wouldn't come out for fear of discrimination by parents and risk of losing their job.

- Complaints tend to be resolved amicably and without too much public attention in order "not to rock the boat too much".
- Schools have never addressed sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) issues in any way, except quickly during Catholic religion lessons. No student came out as queer, sometimes out of fear of the reaction, especially from classmates, given the climate of prejudice.
- In Higher education, there is a clear distinction between the Humanities sector and the STEM sector. In Humanities, LGBTQIA+ issues are more approachable, but even then, as more academic, rather than personally relatable issues. In any case, universities only talk about gay and lesbian identities, not about other queer identities. In STEM SOGI issues are not addressed, not even when training educators.
- Regarding Vocational education and training courses: SOGI issues are addressed only marginally when it comes to discrimination and harassment at work.
- There are many more issues to talk about besides homophobia, that the LGBT community is very diverse, and that diversity should not be dealt with only in an extracurricular way.

Support when questioning one's own LGBTQIA+ status

Young generation in close-minded homes struggle with self-acceptance. Open dialogue in a supportive environment facilitates earlier coming out. Forced outings lead to insecurity. Transgender individuals face pressure to conform. Learners find solace in openly out teachers. Media often surpasses teachers in sexual education. Historical figures' queerness could serve as role models. Queer teachers provide crucial support and understanding.

- Case of open-minded young generation living in close-minded homes.
- An inhospitable environment leads to self-rejection, just to have it easier. An environment in which talking about LGBTQIA+ issues is recurring and perceived as normal would allow earlier coming out and not being preoccupied by one's difference.
- Cases of a person being outed without their consent leading to repercussions and insecurity for the outed person, but also for anyone else questioning their status.
- Cases of pressure to make a choice (especially amongst transgender) of their sex and gender identity.
- Learners don't often confide in staff about their LGBT+ status, but some pupils found it helpful to have an openly out teacher who they could talk to, the personal connection helps.
- The internet and films are better sexual educators than teachers for not providing a healthy affective-sexual education.

- It would be helpful if, when documented, historical personalities were identified as queer to provide role models for those who wonder about themselves.
- For two participants, queer teachers were "the first contact that there are lgbtqia+ people" and were the ones they could go to with problems and who were most likely to show understanding for other experiences of marginalization.

Insensitive speech and hate speech

Insults perpetuate stigma and hinder LGBTQIA+ acceptance and coming out. Discrimination remains unchanged over years. Peers and staff contribute to discrimination through insensitive comments and jokes. Self-discovery amidst insults prompts self-blame. Lack of understanding fuels anger. Supportive teachers could alter outcomes.

- Why are insults tolerated? Their occurrence stigmatises the LGBTQIA+ person and delays their coming out and own acceptance. An Out person is more likely to complain, whereas a person who is not out yet is reluctant for fear of further repercussions or because relatives and friends might find out.
- It is surprising that testimonies of discrimination still reflect the same situation as years ago.
- Most of discrimination instances against learners are due to insensitive comments by peers, but also sometimes by members of staff, usually talking about someone else or as part of insensitive jokes
- For many years I thought I had done something very bad in another life to not deserve to be lucky and be born cis and heterosexual. Then I realised that the only bad part of it was how people made me feel."
- Some time ago I didn't know myself at all and I didn't know for sure that I was gay... Soon the insults came, the word faggot ...because the others noticed that I was gay before I did. I didn't understand anything, I didn't know why they were laughing at me. Not understanding made me angry and I remember my parents telling me that to avoid it I had to sit with a more manly posture. I long to know what would have happened if a teacher had come to my defence.

Lack of information and downplaying the issue

Poor understanding of LGBTQIA+ issues hinders effective support. Early prevention is crucial. Protocols and regular follow-up needed. Lack of coordination among specialists. Central authorities' inclusion strategies underutilized. Teachers lack readiness for tolerance education. Direct discrimination prompts staying closeted. Derogatory language delays self-acceptance. Peers more accepting than teachers. Students need training for peer support. Non-queer teachers often

- A major problem is that people think they are informed when they really have very poor notions about the implications of being LGBTQIA+ and then you cannot offer help.
- Early prevention is better than post-factum reaction to an escalated conflict when it's too late.
- There should be a protocol from the beginning of the course and regular follow-up.
- There are a lot of resources available, but the specialists are not interconnected.
- Lack of awareness and of application of inclusion strategies introduced by central authorities or international organisations like UNESCO.
- Lack of sexual education classes and lack of preparedness of teachers leading civic education classes.
- Lack of discussion and training for teachers on developing tolerance pathways. Teachers are not willing to get into confrontation in the classroom and avoid it.
- "These behaviours" are underestimated by the teachers as childish and seen as something which might pass with time.
- Direct discrimination is avoided by not coming out and closing oneself to others.
- Hearing derogatory terms being used at will is still painful and delays one's own acceptance and even generates self-loathing.
- Hearing words, even when it's meant as a joke can be very hurtful... and it's not funny.
- Reluctance to talk to adults, keep it rather with friends.
- What helped was to talk to peer role models who were out and confident.
- Several mentions of offensive language being used towards other people, or in comments online, and even if it's not directly personal, it still feels bad because it sends a message that having a different sexual orientation or gender identity is simply wrong.
- More and more peers are familiar with the terms and are less prejudiced against their LGBTI students. The teachers though very often are discriminating and, in some cases, homophobic.
- The students need to be well equipped to help their peers and help teachers and schools how to deal with this matter, especially when it comes to conflict resolutions and management.

- The learning experience in the classroom depends very much on the individual teacher. Many non-queer teachers think that they know their way around really well and have "no problem at all" with queer people. However, when dealing with conflicts or experiences of discrimination described by learners, you usually notice that these teachers don't know how to deal with them.
- Learners have all experienced that their experiences were talked down (just like experiences of racism or sexism by others) and that they received no support. In one case, this led to the person themselves believing that they were "making a big fuss about nothing and exaggerating" because they had no support system to talk to about it. However, nothing "seriously bad" happened in the classroom itself.
- Teachers who were openly queer were described as having a much greater impact. On the one hand, they helped them to become more aware of their own identity "because they offered an alternative to heteronormativity and perhaps even made me feel seen for the first time, or not wrong in my own identity."
- One interviewee (who identifies as trans) said that the administration of the training centre was a greater burden for them. It was not possible to use the new name for documentation and internal communication. This was very frustrating and exhausting. "The state wants me to live as the real me before I can officially change anything. How is that supposed to work if my birth name keeps popping up everywhere?"

AXIS 2: Understanding intersectionality

Acknowledgement of needs

Adult education views diversity with mixed optimism and pessimism. Despite increasing openness, institutions resist change. Diversity is often seen as a challenge rather than an opportunity. Acknowledging diversity is vital for institutional relevance. Marginalized individuals can perpetuate discrimination. Inability to perceive queerness hinders action. Conflict can arise in seemingly homogeneous groups.

- Diversity in Adult education : partly pessimistic (the topic has not arrived at management level), partly optimistic (complaints from participants or trainers show the relevance)

- Paradox: "something is happening", certain topics are being requested and demanded, openness is increasing, however at the same time, institutions are resistant to change.
- Diversity is often seen as an additional challenge, but it has always existed > Many people are not aware of the added value and potential of non-discrimination, it is seen as a supposed luxury problem; relevance is only seen if you yourself or people close to you are affected.
- Acknowledging diversity is particularly important for a training institution in order to stay relevant for their learners.
- Marginalized people also reproduce discrimination > Self-reflection must be learned.
- There is "taboo of perception" in different societies: the problem is not so much discrimination, but the inability to perceive queerness. From this, according to her, the lack of action arises.
- Differentiation in relation to one dimension of diversity (e.g. origin) does not necessarily have to lead to conflicts; conflicts can also arise in other supposedly more homogeneous groups.

Barriers to change

Institutions lack mechanisms to listen to discriminated individuals. Administration faces capacity and fatigue issues. Change is hindered by predominantly white male management fearing loss of power. Change agents face isolation and repetition. Adult education must emphasize diversity's relevance. Networking is effective but lacks a long-term vision. Teachers find discussing queer issues with certain ethnic groups taboo.

- There is insufficient provision to listen to the people who are discriminated against and whose needs should be recorded (especially in administration). Public institutions can be particularly resistant to change.
- Administration’s tiredness to process issues related to diversity, lack of administrative capacity
- Managers being stereotypically white and male, change is associated with a loss of power and there are few incentives for change, yet everyone benefits when issues are resolved.
- Who are the agents of this change? It can also be lonely, you have to repeat yourself a lot
- The task of adult education is to translate the relevance of the topic > Hurdle and mission at the same time
- Networking in adult education works well (with regard to diversity)
- Lack of long-term vision of what diversity-sensitive adult education could look like.
- Some teachers reported the difficulty of talking about queer issues with students of African and Middle Eastern origins, because, according to them, the topic would be taboo.

Existing training on the topic of diversity

Diversity training often attracts those already sensitized; making it mandatory could be a solution but risks losing freelance staff. Diversity concerns everyone, not just affected groups. Educators fear saying the wrong thing, hindering discussions. Awareness of discrimination is not limited to affected individuals. Teachers lack sensitivity to hate speech and discrimination, lacking tools to address such behaviour.

- Diversity training is often attended by people who are already sensitized. The training sessions are usually voluntary, so making them mandatory would be a solution. However, in a training institution, some freelance staff might leave, and it could be difficult to replace them.
- Diversity is not only an issue for those groups that are affected, it is everyone's issue. It would be wrong to take the approach: "we do it for others".
- Educators apprehend saying the wrong thing and avoid the topic, instead of clarifying uncertainties and discussing questions. This constitutes a hindrance for the normal running of training courses.
- You don't have to be affected yourself to raise awareness of a certain form of discrimination > the groups themselves are also not homogeneous; however, experiential knowledge must be recognized as knowledge.
- There is little or no sensitivity among the teachers regarding hate speech, use of slurs and discrimination in the classroom. Teachers do not know directly people from marginalized communities and have no tools on how to react to such behaviour among the learners.

AXIS 3: Inclusive learning environments

Inclusive communication and behaviour

Learning atmosphere: Welcoming, authentic, takes time to establish trust. Challenges addressed include discrimination complaints, gender-appropriate language, and involvement for sensitization. Inclusive language crucial for understanding. LGBTQIA+ issues should be addressed in public space by age 15-18. Proposed solutions include parent collectives, academies, and school-family connections. Cross-group meetings can promote intersectionality in training.

Learning atmosphere and environment:
- friendly, openly optimistic, laughter, putting personal sensitivities aside, welcoming atmosphere where everyone feels invited to participate
- The aim is to be authentic: I am seen, heard and noticed > it takes time to establish trust and openness; is sometimes more difficult than conveying the learning content
2) Dealing with challenges, discrimination, etc.: Complaints from participants - is this discrimination?
- Addressing experiences from your own teaching: Transperson in the classroom: as a teacher it's no problem, you just have to get used to it; it's no problem at all for the learners; the institution only sent an official letter to change the pronoun months later - but it was relevant on a practical level in the course right from the start
- Gender-appropriate language: language as something changeable, new word creations and new words can be an enrichment - comparison with other languages (languages that only have one pronoun, gender-appropriate language in other countries)
3) Involvement as a precondition for sensitization
- No, otherwise you would only be allowed to talk about topics that affect you personally
- But it may be easier to talk about it if you are part of the community yourself
- Importance of safe spaces - but desire that they will no longer be needed in the future
The first objective of a teacher should be to evaluate his own prejudices and start from his own experience.
Inclusive language is essential; on the other hand, more than the technical correctness of the language, it is important to make yourself understood by everyone, knowing that not everyone has great knowledge on the topic. It is necessary to put together a technical approach and an emotional approach, to convey the contents in a more engaging way.
1. LGBTQIA+ issues should be part of the public space before the age of 18, at least at 15, when there is already enough maturity and information.

Proposed solutions were the parents collectives and academies on different topics, as well as to utilize the connection between schools and family environment.
A possible intersectionality when it comes to training are visits or mutual meetings between different vulnerable groups.

Inclusive learning content

Addressing LGBTQIA+ issues in textbooks crucial for inclusivity and combatting homophobia. Themes like gender images should be culturally sensitive. SOGI topics should be presented inclusively and within broader contexts. Sex education needs to reflect LGBTQIA+ realities beyond biology lessons. Inclusive lessons should be integrated into various subjects. Supplemental materials and detailed discussions are needed beyond one-day sessions. LGBTQIA+ experiences

- Textbook case study: it's a real example; You can find it however you want, it's real, why shouldn't it be in a textbook? > Type of communication is important, homophobia doesn't belong in courses
Theming of dealing with gender images (Example: Woman with short hair in the textbook - is this irritating or normal?), depending on cultural background/nationality
It is advisable to present SOGI issues within broader containers (such as affectivity or family), otherwise people feel them as distant topics and not feel involved. Likewise, the teacher should demonstrate anticipatory solidarity towards all minorities and personal situations.
3. The extremely easy access to online pornography, as well as online dating leading to sex should be talked about and that it is far from reality.
4. Sex education is often part of biology lessons, it should be more inclusive, reflecting the spectrum of LGBTQIA+ reality. While some teachers will mention lesbian and gay relationships in addition to heterosexual relationships, the other forms of queer identification remain unchartered territory.
5. If sex education is part of biology lessons, shouldn't inclusive lessons and examples about affections / feelings be part of other subjects where human relationships are given as examples?
- Supplement learning materials (other forms of representation, more diversity) > Textbooks are limited, especially heteronormative
- Go into further detail beyond the general awareness of LGBTQIA+ realities

- They do not want LGTBIQ+ issues to be discussed in a single one-day session, because they feel it is insufficient and even more stigmatising and abrupt for the colleagues who do not identify with the community.
- They want to see themselves and their experiences reflected positively and respectfully in the curriculum with everyday examples.
- students should also learn about those topics at some point, to counter harmful talking points that arise in society more and more
- German integration courses now have the rule that two teaching units should be dedicated to queer life realities. However, there is no official material for teachers. This should change, so all trainers are able to have effective lessons.

Inclusive physical spaces

Create an open, supportive learning environment with no pressure, fostering joy and mutual support. Encourage active participation and diverse perspectives. Address discrimination to prevent assaults. Provide safe spaces and support groups for LGBTQIA+ learners. Promote awareness and inclusivity through education and institutional policies. Offer resources for coming out and support. Normalize discussions about LGBTQIA+ topics and provide support for allies.

1) Learning environment to be created for learners: open, progressive learning atmosphere
- good/pleasant learning atmosphere: without (performance) pressure, with joy (in learning), taking everyone along, atmosphere for socializing, mutual support
- No question of a queer background
- Atmosphere through icebreakers, personalities, friendliness, humour/laughing
- it's important to show boundaries

It is important to leave space for students, make them feel an active and non-receptive part, allow them to expose their knowledge (even that which arises from the use of social media), encourage them to ask themselves questions and seek answers. It is important to give space to associations, make local activities known and open up to a continuous contamination of knowledge.

In multicultural classes, it is important to bring out the different perspectives in interpreting sexual differences, without conveying the idea that a perspective is being imposed. Teachers must also convey the idea they wish to hear. The teacher's reference categories must be relativized, not presented as rigid.

- Toilet labeling: do not depict gender, but function (e.g. urinal)
- The more discrimination is addressed (e.g. sexual harassment), the less likely assaults become > speaking up helps
- We need safe spaces, but also spaces for encounters
- Reading/training/willingness to learn about (other) forms of discrimination
- Abolition of capitalism; basic income (to have more time and space; "if everyone gets the same anyway, why should I be jealous of others?"), socialism

2. Open discussion and information should be available earlier, with support of the school psychologist

6. It would be good to encourage mutual support groups for LGBTQIA+ learners to have a dedicated safe environment and to show that a learners questioning their LGBTQIA+ status are not alone. Celebratory events could improve visibility and open discussion.

- Raise awareness of the "rules" and educational trainings when registering for courses (like privacy policy)
- Identification of the educational institution (like "School without Racism") via posters, exhibitions, rainbow flag, clearly formulate the institution's self-image and communicate it clearly to everyone (no place for racism, homophobia, etc.)
- Protection from student-based discrimination
- They want to feel safe doing simple things like going to the bathroom.
- a guide "How to come out in class", not only for learners but also for teachers
- it would be helpful to have someone of trust to talk to and to confide in
- have sessions to talk about LGBT+, just like talking about any other topic

Support for allies groups, internal groups for LGBTI peers

Proactive training of educators, staff and learners

Decolonize teaching with diverse voices and viewpoints. Management support and diversity-sensitive employees are crucial. Mandatory diversity training for teachers, textbook revisions needed. Emphasize intersectionality and tolerance for all. Long-term investment in teacher development. Clear guidelines and resources for inclusive classes. Collaborate with LGBTQIA+ organizations and international partners. Encourage open dialogue and representation of

We need to decolonize teaching proposals, presenting voices from different cultures and a plurality of points of view.
Standardization does not work.
- Management must support diversity
- Diversity-sensitive employees are the beginning; building on this, structures may change in the long term
- Authentic and trustworthy institutions
- Networking > start with this and then expand
- Mandatory further training for teachers with regard to diversity-sensitive events and materials
- Textbooks need to be revised
- Recommendation for companies: "Don't write things on it until they have been implemented"
To fill in "the basket of the teachers" with more "differences" - to look for intersectionality and build sensitivity that tolerance is not by our choosing, it should be towards everyone (no matter their size, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, etc.)
The schools authorities should recognize that by developing teachers resources and sensitivity is a long term investment.
- trainings for educators and interested people
- Contact points are important > central contact points or colleagues
- Clearer guidelines and institutional support
- Resources for making classes more inclusive not only in Pride month.
We focused on reactions from teachers towards students and possible ways to react. We discussed that no matter how good the tools or training if the teachers cannot emotionally relate to marginalized communities they are hard to change their perception and mindset. We talked about the lengthy process of changing attitudes and stereotypes and that nevertheless the personal stories and learning through experiencing have the potential to make teachers rethink their views.

Proposed solution is for a research among the teacher on their needs on certain topics. The group discussed it is hard to be done, but nevertheless a possible way.

- Cooperation with LGBTQIA+ non-profit sector to support the education system
- Cooperate with international partners to help each other and learn from one another

The students agree that we need teachers who can talk openly and reassuringly about different sexual identities and listen to requests from students. Training interventions are also requested in workplaces. The importance of not relegating queer identities other than lesbian and gay to silence emerges.

- They prefer to look for examples on social networks of other experiences because they feel that there is no reliable figure who can give them advice while they are in the centres
- more representation of marginalized groups in the classroom ("everything that is outside the German majority society")
- Administrations should also receive such training and be familiar with current legislation (e.g. when it comes to changing marital status)

Campaigns in school/university about tolerance and promoting understanding

AXIS 4: Classroom management skills & conflict resolution

Classroom management and Conflict prevention

Learning differences persist; avoiding escalation is key. Openness fosters mutual respect. Not all queer experiences are alike. Understanding heterogeneity is vital; diverse perspectives enrich learning. Proactive diversity education needed for normalization. Encourage questioning pedagogy. Establish clear rules and create safe spaces. Value individuality and avoid patronizing attitudes. Create connections and foster togetherness. Praise and recognition are crucial. Informal

- Differences in learning preconditions cannot be eliminated immediately
- The worst thing that can happen is escalation > tend to avoid it; or resolve it through one-to-one discussions
- The explosive nature of the topic may depend on the topic and scope of the course > a three-hour course is different from an integration course lasting six months, unresolved conflicts at the beginning will take revenge later on
- Openness is also a question of mutual respect and acceptance > as a teacher, I don't want to have to deny myself either ("clear the air at the beginning and then the issue is settled")

- Not all Queerness is the same: some groups are more discriminated than others and are less accepted in the public discourse

Dealing with heterogeneity:

- Each person brings their own issues > you have to listen, but a reaction or help is not always necessary; an individual view of people is important
- Heterogeneity is also a question of majority and minority societies
- The aim is to understand heterogeneity and provide differentiated lessons > do not over- or underchallenge
- "If we liberate the most marginalized group we can imagine, we liberate everyone" > it may be necessary for a certain group to temporarily relinquish privileges to achieve this
- Multiple perspectives in teams are important > Create advisory structures and assistance systems to bring in as many perspectives as possible

2. More comprehensive and proactive approach to diversity education

Slow normalization on the topic through prepared teachers and adequate reactions in concrete situations.

According to the South American teacher, the school should develop a "pedagogy of questioning," also to address queer issues. Teachers should encourage the emergence of problems and teach how to look for answers. According to her, however, Italian culture is reluctant to these methods, because asking someone questions is equivalent to questioning the skills of the person being questioned. According to the Italian teachers, there is a risk of being intrusive or "sexualising" some aspects.

- Addressing pronouns at the start of courses: introduction at the beginning with names and preferred pronouns
- Flipchart with "conversation rules" for working together to create a safe space > depending on group dynamics
- Laughter/humor connects and breaks the ice; also solve conflicts with jokes (e.g. by exaggerating)
- Establish rules at the beginning and make them transparent and build understanding for them
- Have open ears/listen/be present, commitment of the teacher beyond the classroom (e.g. conversations, assistance during breaks)
- Know participants in the course (e.g. names, pronouns) and value their individuality ("You are okay the way you are") > a counter position: group should be more homogeneous, avoid individualization, "get a grip on the group"
- Do not treat participants in a patronizing or derogatory way ("Explained extra slowly for you") > Treat them with respect and trust them to do things

- Create an atmosphere of learning connections and personal connections, e.g. through mixed group work > Create togetherness (through what connects, not the differences)
- common connection: the "abstract general" > work towards a common goal
- Praise is an important tool > Recognition measured by individual level
- If your own queerness is a "normal", self-evident topic right from the start, the participants accept this better > Fears that this will have negative consequences often do not materialize When working with students on these topics an easy everyday kind of attitude and language was discussed as more effective, as well as the use of Snapchat and TikTok as comms channels.
- They express that everything is too institutionalised as sometimes they would just like to have an informal chat and not having to go reporting to the department of the educational centre
- reluctance to talk to adults should be addressed proactively by school staff
- it is important to find the courage to talk to the school councillor or the director, as they have the power to change things
- the importance of support and validation can mean avoiding self-harm or suicide

Positive conflict resolution

Authority comes from understanding and experience, not dominance. Respect diversity without necessarily being affected yourself. Rejection isn't always discrimination. Balance irritation and demands. Learn to articulate discomfort. Promote empathy and love. Validate all feelings. Prioritize early intervention and continuous reinforcement. Teachers as role models are crucial. Practice tolerance and open discussions. Address discrimination immediately.

- Authority comes from within, not through dominant behaviour > also requires teaching experience
- You can't reach everyone
- You don't have to be "affected" yourself to raise awareness of diversity, but you do have to "do your homework" and listen, which can be learned > it's about respecting values and fundamental rights
- Rejection does not necessarily equal discrimination
- Find a balance between irritation and avoiding excessive demands
- We have to learn to talk differently > lack of language about what bothers us

- Learning "radical empathy" as a concept at school and dealing with structural power; more love (in different variations)
- All feelings are legitimate; comparisons are not necessarily useful > "Pain is pain", grief is also legitimate, that you have to give up privileges or that it is not your turn yet
- "situated knowledge" approach > we are all individuals with pasts and traumas and must endure this, even if it hurts and is exhausting > has always been there, there must be spaces for exchange
- Shared knowledge about trauma, time to mourn together > collective mourning to overcome pain

1. Early intervention and regular reinforcement

Work directly with the teachers, as they are one of the first responders to situations between students. One of the experts in the group shared their experience with a program by their organisation through sports and games targeting sports teachers giving a very good responses and follow-ups. Easy approaches like "we are not going to put the rainbow flag in the classroom", but "we can paint rainbows on our name tags and this way LGBTIQ students can feel supported".

- Relationship level is important > learning is a relationship, dealing with each other as equals
- teachers act as role models > if they deal well with conflicts, this rubs off on participants; set an example of other practices, address difficult issues
- Practicing fault tolerance > Tolerating other perspectives for the time being
- Expressing your own "concern" in critical situations can help and also provide an opportunity for discussion > "I'm queer too" (alternative: "Yes, there are queer people" or: talk about your own experiences, but not about yourself: "I know lots of gay people") > It depends on the situation and the group whether you want to open up personally or go into confrontation (but: "I don't define myself by my sexuality, I define myself as a person")
- Method: return critical questions to the group
- Place those affected where the topic is > Don't talk about others
- Step by step > Process of approaching and reflecting
- Ending discussions is also okay (e.g. on gendering) > disclose your own reasons and attitude
- it would help if instances of discrimination or offensive language are being called out and stopped at the moment when they happen

Role of education institutions' management

Clear guidelines lacking for addressing LGTBQIA+phobic behavior. Administration support needed. Protocols should cover staff protection. Create welcoming policies and enforce zero tolerance. Improve communication and collaboration. Provide quick solutions and support for teachers. Educate staff and empower them to react adequately. Offer diversity training. Provide online resources and seminars for sharing practices.

- There are no clear guidelines on how to address LGTBIphobic behaviour towards both students and staff because the protocols are very general and present extreme situations
- The administration doesn't always support them when dealing with uncomfortable situations in class as they express that most of the conflicts are expected to be dealt with through one hour of mediation when what is required is education.
- Some feel vulnerable and unprotected from discrimination and harassment by the students based on their sexual orientation because existing protocols are student-focused.
- If the course presents a topic associated with gender stereotypes, it is very difficult even for students who are outside heteronormativity to enrol in the course because they feel insecure in this environment.
- One person in the team who only talks to participants informally (listen, assess needs)
- Appoint a (well-trained) contact person for complaints in the institution
- More knowledge and discourse about diversity and discrimination in society away from pro/contra discussions
- More time and space for emotions in the workplace

7. A Zero Tolerance Policy, shoud be enforced with the help of auxiliary staff and role model teachers, especially if they are out.
8. Teachers should remain vigilant against (any form) of bullying and actively foster positive safe environment for everyone.

1. Schools to establish a clear, visible policy of welcoming environment
2. A policy of zero tolerance, especially in apprenticeships and continuing VET, should leverage the fear of rejection and fear of losing one's job.apprenticeship, which can lead to financial consequences for the individual.
3. Improved communication and collaboration between professionals and institutions

Also quick solutions to be given to the teachers (for example: link to a website or organization that can support them, a leaflet or a program that is developed, a website with concrete resources, etc.) So they are not put into a position to directly support when they do not feel secure, but still to have a resource to provide.

Also what is important to keep in mind is that people/activists should not expect quick and immediate results after giving training to teachers. Be aware that it takes time for sensitivity to be built.

Mentioned was that teachers also need a supportive environment or network. Someone to lead them in the journey of learning and raising knowledge.

The school psychologists can be a very good entry point also for raising awareness. Keep in mind that for certain topics maybe a specialised sensitivity should be built in them too.

Access to schools through Fulbright teachers around the country.

According to the Italian teachers, if there were requests for support from queer students, the response of the educational institutions would depend on the teacher involved: some teachers would be attentive, others would be rejecting.

- Tips for educators on a platform (e.g. dealing with conflicts - not only with regard to LGBTQIA+, but also racism, etc.)
- Sensitization training for staff, not just teachers > should be mandatory
- The institutions also need a clear stance, as does the management

Some general directions of necessary work have been formulated by the educators:

- Increase the discussion about and the visibility of LGBTQIA+ realities in everyday life
- Measure clearly the instances of discrimination and anti-LGBTQIA+ behaviour
- Educate members of staff and empower them to react adequately when a situation occurs
- Establish a clear approach when dealing with acts of LGBTQIA+ phobia, same for all and visible
- Have effective sanctions and zero-tolerance for LGBTQIA+ phobic incidents
- There is no real repercussion every time a disrespectful comment is made in class.
- Teachers should receive diversity training or it should be part of the training in order to react adequately when they have marginalized people in the class, when conflicts arise, when someone says something discriminatory, ...
- it is important to educate oneself about the reality of other people in order to not simplify their reality and not judge

Assist teachers and professors in conflict resolution management

Online resources for teachers and students

Seminars or other form of events for sharing practices