



Understanding, Developing and Implementing LGBT-inclusive Policies in Schools across Europe

REPORT

Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions (OBESSU)
And
the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Transgender and Queer
Youth and Student Organisation (IGLYO)

In cooperation with the
Directorate of Youth and Sports
of the Council of Europe

European Youth Centre, Strasbourg, France

16th – 22nd April 2007



This report gives an account of various aspects of the study session. It has been produced by and is the responsibility of the educational team of the study session. It does not represent the official point of view of the Council of Europe.

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1. Executive summary

IGLYO and OBESSU organised a joint study session in 2001 in the European Youth Centre of Strasbourg on homophobic bullying, a very positive experience for both organisations. Ever since, there has been a discussion about once again bringing together the unique expertise of both organisations on the topic of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity in schools. The inimitable symbiosis between OBESSU and IGLYO had a great potential, especially for creating a space where pan-European activists could meet and take common steps towards a more LGBT-inclusive education in Europe.

The event took place from the 16th to the 22nd April 2007 in Strasbourg's European Youth Centre, with successful results.

The whole preparation process was marked by the fact that this study session was to be organised by two different organizations, which carried some worries concerning the coherence of the team and of the event itself. Nevertheless, the main obstacles were solved with no major difficulties by the team. The team was finally formed by early January, consisting of 3 OBESSU members and 2 IGLYO members (see below).

The team met from the 22nd to the 26th February 2007 in the EYCS, with the very helpful presence of the Educational Advisor Nadine Lyamouri-Bajja. Defining aims and objectives, designing the study session's schedule, choosing external experts to be invited to the event, selecting participants and establishing the task-division for the weeks to come before the study session were some of the main things done during these days. Full details can be found in *4. Report from the first preparatory meeting* below.

Choosing the participants for the study session was a hard task; this was mainly due to IGLYO having opened their call to representatives from non-member organisations (while OBESSU opened it only to its members), as well as the intrinsic difficulties for getting school students to travel in September and miss one week of school, the team received 40 applications from the side of IGLYO, and 15 from the side of OBESSU (15 places had been allowed to each organisation). Taking into consideration nationality, gender, experience in activism and the will to contribute to a diverse and rich group, 29 participants (13 on behalf of OBESSU and 16 on behalf of IGLYO) were selected.

The second preparatory team meeting took place in the EYCS on the 14th April, just before the arrival of participants. Despite some occasional difficulties

in communication within the team because of language, it came to organise a very satisfactory event for participants, experts and the organisers themselves—as most of them expressed during the final evaluation.

The session as such took place following the schedule that the team had prepared (in spite of some necessary last-minute changes), and was structured in three main areas:

Understanding

From the beginning of the event to Wednesday the 18th, participants were invited to go through a process of comprehension of LGBT issues, and issues related to secondary education. Here the team had to face something that had been foreseen during previous meetings: the gap between LGBT activists' and school student activists' expertise. Even if it was not an easy task, most conflicts were progressively solved, and participants came to share a common knowledge denominator on issues of discrimination, sexual orientations and gender identities.

Developing

On Thursday the 19th and Friday the 20th, participants were invited to develop, firstly in working groups and later in plenary, guidelines for designing LGBT-inclusive policies in European schools. The main outcome was a comprehensive 10-page document that works as a useful collection of all the ideas that came out of the working groups.

Implementing

On Saturday the 21st participants were offered a diverse set of tools in order to be able to implement the outcomes previously yielded. Here the main challenges were the very different contexts in each country (for instance between a country with some LGBT-inclusive policies working already in schools, and another European country where sexual diversity is such a taboo that potential organisers of a workshop on the topic would find very serious and threatening obstacles). However, this diversity finally came to be very inspiring for everyone, the stress being put in mainstreaming, networking and international cooperation.

The final outcome of the study session can be defined as very satisfying. Both the group of participants and the team met the expected goals, going

through a learning process that was very enriching for everybody. The event opened a whole range of possibilities, empowering participants to face their countries' reality with the help of other LGBT activists and school student activists from other parts of Europe. The numerous initiatives that came up during and after the study session such as an experience-sharing blog that was put online (which has yet to be utilised), or a follow-up event to be held in Norway in 2008, as well as other initiatives like IGLYO's research on homophobia in schools, will allow European NGOs to go further in their struggle in building schools, and therefore societies, more open to sexual and gender diversity.

The preparatory team gratefully acknowledges the invaluable help of its Educational Advisor from the Council of Europe, Nadine Lyamouri-Bajja, for her active involvement in this project and her invaluable help for facilitating the team's work and the participants' learning process.

2. Team details

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3. Aims and objectives of the study session

Aim of the study session

Establish a standard for school policies that aim to recognise and respect the diversity of the school students' sexual orientations and gender identities, and are inclusive of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people.

Key Objectives

Understanding

- Explore commonly-used terms and their meanings and try to set up a common understanding;
- Raise young people's awareness on LGBT issues focusing on the dynamics of social exclusion and inclusion;
- Identity issues and problems faced by young people in relation to sexual orientations and gender identities;
- Share experiences on the way schools deal with sexual orientations and gender identities.

Developing

- Identify key areas to consider when developing LGBT-inclusive policies;
- Develop participants' knowledge and skills in drafting school policies;
- Develop guidelines for the creation of LGBT-inclusive policies.

Implementing

- Develop participants' knowledge and skills in implementing school policies;
- Encourage cooperation between the school student movements and the LGBT movements;
- Empower participants to implement outcomes of the study session.

4. Report from the first preparatory meeting

Day 1 – 23rd February 2007

After the presentation of OBESSU, IGLYO and the CoE, a little discussion about working methodologies took place. The team members shared some worries and motivations, and maybe the most outstanding issue was the will to

build honesty and to keep an open way of conflict management. Besides, the tasks and roles of the Educational Advisor and the Course Director were defined.

Bruno Selun, ex-Board member of OBESSU who was in charge of writing the application for this study session, presented it. A discussion of the title proposed in this application took place. Finally, *“From Social Exclusion to Inclusion: understanding, developing and implementing inclusive policies for LGBT Youth in secondary schools across Europe”* was changed into *“Understanding, Developing and Implementing LGBT-inclusive policies in schools across Europe”*, where LGBT stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender.

Afterwards, a brainstorm was done in order to think about the aim and objectives of the study session. The following elements came up: LGBT issues included in inclusive policies in schools, LGBT mainstreaming, diversity, usualisation, sexual education, formal education and hidden curricula in schools, more inclusive school policies taking into account the needs of young people, benefit the whole community, rights and LGBT, making LGBT issues a continuous part of youth organisations’ agenda, social inclusion, different levels for policies.

Later, the aim of the study session was defined as *“establish a standard for school policies that aim to recognise and respect the diversity of their pupils’ sexual orientations and gender identities, and are inclusive of LGBT people”*.

On the basis of this aim, the objectives for the study session were defined. Within the field of **Understanding**, the following objectives were set:

- Explore commonly used terms and their meanings and try to set up a common understanding
- Raise young people’s awareness on LGBT issues focusing on the dynamics of social exclusion and inclusion
- Identify issues and problems faced by young people in relation to sexual orientations and gender identities
- Share experiences on the way schools deal with sexual orientations and gender identities

Within the field of **Development**, the following objectives were set:

- Identify key areas to consider when developing LGBT-inclusive policies
- Develop participants’ knowledge and skills in drafting school policies

- Develop guidelines for the creation of LGBT-inclusive policies

Within the field of **Implementing**, the following objectives were set:

- Develop participants' knowledge and skills in implementing school policies
- Encourage cooperation between the school student movements and the LGBT movements
- Empower participants to implement outcomes of the study session

Finally, the DVD "Spell it out", produced by the British organisation Schools Out!, was watched by the team members as an example of good practice.

Day 2 – 24th February 2007

The second meeting day was mainly devoted to defining of the study session's schedule, which can be found in the annex.

Day 3 – 25th February 2007

The last day of the first preparatory team meeting was devoted to the task division and to the discussion of practical issues for the study session.

- The team decided that most activities required being planned by writing a module summary stating its aims, objectives, methodology, programme, materials needed and leaving some space for writing its outcomes.

After discussing some practical issues such as administrative arrangements, reimbursements, communication and so on, the team evaluated its first meeting. Some of the issues that came up were:

- Positive surprise concerning the easiness for the work of a team formed by people with so different backgrounds: honesty and common understanding of the team were positively valued.
- Confidence on the good work and well-functioning of the team.
- Value of 3 meeting days, even if it would have been positive to have more time for further and deeper discussion of LGBT issues.
- Very positive opinion on the Educational Advisor and her contributions.
- Concerns about the extreme length of the activity (9 working days for the prep-team).
- Concerns about the need to present ourselves to the participants as an open team, even if we all share the same opinions.

After two of the team members had to leave, the rest of the team (Claire, Bruno and Guille) went through the applications received so far and discussed about the profile of participants.

5. Day-by-day report of the study session

Day 0 – 15th April

The 15th April was the day of arrival and the first time most of the participants met each other, and the group met as such. The first evening is always important for creating a good social climate, where everybody feels comfortable with each other. After dinner the preparatory team gathered all the participants on the terrace. The team presented itself and shortly introduced the programme of the night. Different games were used to get to know all the names, countries and the organisations of the people in the group. The last games were aimed at starting the group building, focusing on team work and building trust. All the activities were drawn from the Council of Europe's publications, such as COMPASS or Companion.

After this session, the participants were invited to stay on the terrace, and enjoy some drinks and snacks. In that way the group building continued in an even more informal way, giving the participants the chance to get to know each other more personally.

Day 1 – 16th April

Morning session

The first working day started with an official welcome by the preparatory team. The team members presented themselves and their backgrounds in the school student and/or LGBT movement. Nadine welcomed the participants on behalf of the Council of Europe, and continued with a short presentation of the Council of Europe, its key bodies, and its activities. Also the organisations OBESSU and IGLYO were presented, this time involving the participants with a short quiz. Then it was time to start focusing on the study session and a general introduction to the aims, the objectives and the programme followed. This presentation aimed to



create a common understanding of the expected outcomes within the group. The programme of the day was thoroughly explained.

Before the coffee break Tina Mulcahy, Executive Director of the European Youth Centre, introduced the participants to the building, its history and use. She also presented the house rules that have to be followed by everyone working and living in the building. The preparatory team had prepared a short treasure hunt based on different pictures taken in the youth centre, aiming to make the participants feel comfortable in the house—getting to know the Centre, from common areas to useful places such as the computer room—, and with each other.

The coffee break was followed by short icebreakers. The next session was focused on the participants' hopes, fears and expectations. Partly the team found this reflection important for the learning process of the participants, and partly it helped the team to follow the processes of the participants and adapt the programme to their expectations of the week. The participants were given pieces of paper clothes in different colours, where they wrote down their hopes, fears and expectations concerning the study session. They were then hung up on a washing line outside the plenary, so that everybody could read what the others were thinking and in that way also helping to make sure that the fears would not come true and that hopes and expectations were fulfilled.

Afternoon session

Knowing the delicacy to the topic of the study session, the team had chosen to continue the group-building activities after lunch. The team had picked an exercise from the All Different All Equal Education pack, "Dominoes", working exactly as the game dominoes but played with people instead of pieces. The exercise underlines all the things that people hold in common although they might have different countries of origin or sexual orientations, for instance. In the beginning of the game, much focus is put on visible characteristics but later in the game more personal things are used as well. Also the physical contact that the game demands is important for the group building and the participants really appreciated the game.

The session continued with an exercise where the participants were divided into smaller groups. The groups were given an egg that they were asked to give a name and a personality. The purpose of the game was to take care of the egg and make sure it survived also when being dropped from a height of 3 metres. All the groups created different mechanisms for protecting their egg, and these strategies were then presented to the rest of the

participants. The exercise was evaluated in the end, and focus was put on the different roles that people took up and were assigned in the groups.

The next game demanded speed and efficient team work. The group was divided into 4 smaller groups which were then asked to stand on chairs and move forward together. All kinds of strategies were created and the groups visibly got into a healthy competitive spirit, which made possible that participants feel closer to each other in a friendly atmosphere.



The last exercise of the group building was called “Draw your flower”, and was aiming partly at self-knowledge and partly at getting to know each other. The group was asked to draw flowers where all petals represented an aspect of their lives. The different petals could have different sizes as well according to the part it played in their lives. The flowers were then put on the wall of the plenary room. Many of the participants found it interesting to see what kind of things people had chosen to have on their flower (e.g. “currently non-disabled”), and it resulted in many discussions. The drawing was the last step of developing openness in the group and a climate where everybody could work together.

After a short coffee break, the group was ready to start working. The fact that the participants came from very different backgrounds was challenging, and made it even more important to give the participants a good introduction and deep understanding of the matters the study session was dealing with. Especially some of the participants with a background in the school student movement were quite inexperienced in the field of LGBT issues. Therefore this session focused on exploring L(esbian), G(ay), B(isexual), T(ransgender) & S(traight), and what sexual identity and gender identity could mean.

This was followed by an exercise dealing with the different stereotypes and prejudices about the different ‘categories’ above. In smaller groups, the participants were discussing what L, G, B, T & S men and women are like and how they are expected to be. The groups made drawings of all the categories, and presented them to the group in plenary. Interestingly enough, all groups presented more or less the same stereotypes.

Below are the results of the exercise:

A straight man:

- Has many girls and an objectifying view of women;
- Watches pornography;
- Loves cars;
- Earns money to take care of the family;
- Is often violent and uses/is fascinated by guns;
- Is addicted to watching television, especially football;
- A business man wearing power symbols such as a tie;
- Is dominant, sometimes a control freak;
- Has a *macho* attitude and way of being;
- Likes card games and casino;
- Sex is more important than emotions;
- Does not want to stay with the same woman for more than three years;
- He sees his interests as the most important.

A straight woman:

- Is very feminine;
- All she wants is to be in a relationship in order to fulfil her need to be with a man;
- Is dreaming of a steady relationship, a nice house and kids;
- Dependent on her husband, also financially;
- Polite to everyone and always happy and smiling;
- Even if she has problems in her life she does not discuss it with her husband, yet she complains all the time to her “bridge friends” (*sic*);
- Is passive and does not do anything to change her situation;
- Is a fashion victim who is buying things to look nice for her husband;
- Loves soap operas;
- Is in general a weak individual who needs to depend on someone else;
- Is always sacrificing and helping others but never asking for anything back.

A lesbian woman:

- Has short hair in extreme colours and a lot of piercing and tattoos;
- Smokes a lot;
- Fixes her car herself;
- Wears large black boots and masculine clothes;
- Is vegetarian;



- Lifts weights;
- Is loud and dominant
- Does not have “real sex”;
- Is an independent woman with a strong personality;
- Is getting angry with straight women who are not fighters or feminists;
- Hates men, and does not want anything to do with them;
- Is the opposite of the straight woman.

A gay man:

- Is promiscuous;
- Is effeminate;
- Wears pink clothes and make-up;
- Works with fashion, dancing, graphic design, hair dressing and TV;
- Best friends of straight women (“fag hags”);
- Is a drag queen in his spare time;
- Always drinks cocktails.

A bisexual person:

- Only women are bisexual;
- Interested in everybody;
- No particular stereotype about the looks;
- Those who can’t make up their mind on whether they are gay or straight;
- Straight people that are trying to be cool who want to have sex with everyone;
- Invisible and ignored;
- Teenagers and generally those who are insecure.

A male-to-female transgender person:

- Abnormal;
- Mentally-ill and have physical problems;
- Wants the stereotypical perfect female body with big breasts;
- Broad-shouldered and hairy.

A female-to-male transgender person:

- Abnormal;
- Mentally-ill and with physical problems;
- Plays football and try to behave as the stereotypical straight man.

It is important to remember that **these stereotypes were not the perception of the participants, but what they thought society thought of these groups.**

The presentations resulted in a lively discussion about the presented images but also about stereotypes in general. Many of the participants felt provoked by the extreme image that was presented of the “category” they identified to. The group reacted strongly against the fact that most of the stereotypes were related to the gender of the person, and the way “normal” is still synonym for heterosexual. The group agreed that in many cases, stereotypes are too black and white and limit our way of thinking, and seldom anyone has all the characteristics that the stereotype presupposes. Although they often make people feel uncomfortable, it is important to remember that everyone has stereotypes, and that all of us probably are fulfilling some of the stereotypes about ourselves as well, as well as hold prejudices towards other members of the society. Overcoming the upset feelings the session built a climate of acceptance and understanding, and many of the discussions continued afterwards in an informal environment. Moreover, once mainstream stereotypes had been presented and discussed, the group was on the track of building a “safe environment” for discussing tough issues regarding discrimination on the basis of sexual orientations and gender identities in schools.

Before dinner, the evaluation groups were introduced, and all the participants were divided into groups with their responsible team member. Every preparatory team member had a group of participants, with whom they met for about half an hour every day before dinner. The groups discussed the programme of the day, and how the participants were doing in general. This gave the participants an opportunity to give the team immediate feedback, but also a second chance to debrief the happenings of the day in smaller groups than the plenary.

Evening session

The evening consisted in a “Scavenger Hunt”. The participants were divided into four teams. The same set of practical and theoretical questions was handed to all the teams, who had a maximum of two hours to complete the tasks and answer the questions. At the end, the groups presented their answers in a relaxed and funny way, and a small jury assessed the work of all the groups. In general it was an appreciated game that improved the social climate of the

group, although it was felt some tasks were performed too early in the week and made some participants feel uneasy.

Day 2 – 17th April

Morning session

Following a request from Sue Sanders, senior activist in the NGO “Schools Out” in the UK and expert invited for the purpose of this study session, the whole group observed a minute of silence for the 33 victims who died in a school shooting in Virginia last night.

Sue Sanders then gave a lecture on “Normativity and norms”. After entering a working agreement proposed by her (encouraging open and constructive participation of all people present), she started giving a background on how normativity, and heteronormativity in particular, influences learning and the learning climate as well as how educational policies play a crucial role in this respect. Sue Sanders gave many important facts on LGBT issues throughout Europe:

- “Double bedrooms are not available for lesbians in Great Britain. In many countries, most people do not recognise their citizens’ rights because of their sexuality.”
- “If you don’t name something it is very difficult to do something about it.” (Insisting on the necessity of talking about difficult issues such as bullying, violence, hate crime, etc. in an open and safe way in order to address these difficult issues.)

She gave the chance to the participants to share experiences in LGBT issues. For instance, it was observed that 6 out of 30 participants had been aware of one of their teacher being LGBT, and gave many definitions, e.g.:

Heterosexism is a set of assumptions and practices that promote heterosexual relationships as the only ‘natural’ and valid form of sexual orientation. It recognises/rewards those who are heterosexual, and ignores/penalises those who are not.

A **homophobic incident** is any incident which is perceived to be homophobic by the victim or any other person, and/or that is directed to impact upon those known or perceived to be LGBT people.



The group then discussed the triangle theory of levels of discrimination by Gordon Allport:

- Level 1* **Antilocution**; verbal abuse, using derogatory language, name calling & stereotyping.
- Level 2* **Avoidance**; withdrawal, avoiding contact, making people invisible, acting on prejudice.
- Level 3* **Discrimination**; using any Power to hand, to Control who gets what e.g. holding crucial information, excluding people from jobs, education and/or housing.
- Level 4* **Physical attack**; graffiti, property damage, harassment, physical bullying, Rape.
- Level 5* **Genocide**: ethnic cleansing, murder, suicide.

The participants also discussed many statements, among which:

“Heterosexism supports violence against women.” “We are sexualising 5-year-old children? We are assuming heterosexuality and teaching it.” **“Black people don’t get killed because there are black, black people get killed because of racism.”** “Most schools are institutionalised racist.” **“When I design school uniforms and I decide that every girl has to wear skirts: that is wrong.”** “Homophobia costs a lot to the State.” **“America: [Picture of an extreme homophobic demonstration by religious people: turn or burn, God hates fags.]”**

After an hour of input, Sue Sanders took the participants into a world of changed identities, which demanded from those identifying as heterosexual to think themselves homosexual, and vice-versa (no-one had to voice whom they identified to at any point; this was done at the personal level). Everyone tried to empathise with the situation of “him- or herself of the identity of the other”. The task was to imagine being heterosexual, part of a minority or with a disability in a predominantly LGBT world, with LGBT rules and LGBT normativity. Sue read some situations from different ages of young heterosexuals who were meant to live in this changed world. She intended for the participants to understand how heavy it could be to be a heterosexual in another world. She did not pay any attention to the participants whom already identified as heterosexual who had to change too, and because she did not read stories about homosexuals in this changed world they felt excluded. The group then tried to find out how they felt with their new identities. Among others, participants said they were feeling “comfortable”, “like a joke”, “difficult”, “challenging thinking to be heterosexual and to be a minority in the

same time”, “alienated”, “violated”, “neutral”, “frightened”, “guilty for [their] parents’ disappointment”, “very upset”, “misunderstood”, “frustrated”, and “angry”. At the end, there was not a big difference between feelings of before and after the exercise, because LGBT participants still felt a minority, and heterosexual participants felt they belonged to the majority. That brought no real empathy.

Sue Sanders brought different children and teenagers books with her. There was one book the group was asked to discuss further; the title was “It’s okay to be different”, and the controversy resided in the fact that the main protagonist was homosexual. The group could not agree with the title, because they believed that a homosexual should never feel “different” and that is exactly what the activists are fighting for—not seeing oneself as different, i.e. not changing the selves but changing the norms.



Afternoon session

After Sue Sanders’s input and lunch, the group went on with something more practical. In the lobby of the first floor of the Youth Centre, the team laid a blank, 20-by-2-metre poster on the ground. Participants were supposed to design a kind of “Wikipedia” about all the issues that they found interesting. So they searched for words, word groups, proverbs or sentences they found interesting to discuss, or which arose controversy (e.g. “LGBT”, “trans”, “queer”, “young”, “love”, “norms”, etc.). Unlimited additions were made linking word to word and one comment to another. That made every single answer quite anonymous to the rest of the group members. They worked in silence and independently and were all the time challenged by new phrases and words that appeared. Unconsciously and by connecting different comments all the questions were answered automatically.

Due to the time limit in the end there was space to ask loudly questions that still busied the participants. The group started a walking-while-talking



action, a version of the “Where do you stand?” exercise from Compass. The room represented the mind and the space between the walls was the level of acceptance. One could ask binary questions, and everyone had to answer by walking to one or the other side of the room, one standing for “Yes/Agree” and the other for “No/Disagree”. Depending on the level of agreement, participants were allowed to stand somewhere in between. Some participants could give an explanation for standing in a particular place. Participants could change their places as the discussions went on. The discussions were moderated by the prep-team, and turned out to be very constructive. One of the questions discussed for the longest time was “Is queer an exclusive word?”.

After a short coffee break, there was a session on intercultural learning. The aim was not only to define and explore this concept, but also to analyse how intercultural learning can be put into practice by participants in their realities. The session started with the “Euro-rail À La Carte” exercise from the Education Pack, where the participants were asked to pick three people with whom they would like to share a train compartment from a list of 17 people. All of the 17 people were described with one line, and most of them belonged to a more or less discriminated group. The participants were then asked to move into groups where they had to agree on the three most popular and the three least popular fellow passengers. The groups then presented their views and tried to explain why they had chosen as they did. The exercise was followed by a thorough debriefing, where many of the participants said it was difficult to realise that they had prejudices themselves as well towards other minorities.

Evening session

The evening saw a traditional inter-cultural evening, where all the participants presented their countries. They had been asked to bring something that is specific for their country, such as food, drinks and/or music, in order to present their country in an entertaining way. It was much appreciated by the participants.

Day 3 – 18th April

Morning session

In order to make sure that everybody felt comfortable with the words and expressions used during the session, the preparatory team started the morning with introducing “Satisfaction”, a cardboard box outside the plenary where the participants could anonymously put questions about words, terms or whatever

they would wonder about. From then on, every morning started with the team opening the box and answering the questions all together in plenary. In that way, the answers and definitions were created and accepted by the whole group.

Then the day started off with an explanation of the process of the week and the understanding of the flow of work of the study session. Bruno from the preparatory team then gave a presentation on the social exclusion of LGBT young people in Europe.

The easiest way to move forward in explaining the participants in which ways social exclusion because of sexual orientation takes place was to give them the possibility to imagine the situation on their own while being given different examples. A PowerPoint presentation was used in order to illustrate today's school reality.

Bruno then explained how LGBT people are excluded, how they feel because of that, and what happens as a consequence. The lack of concrete information on the situation of LGBT youth across Europe was amongst the biggest problems preventing people from better understanding of the challenges LGBT youth faces. Bruno presented a recent report by IGLYO and ILGA–Europe on LGBT young people's social exclusion, and shared some of the most important news from that publication, e.g.:

- LGBT young people being discriminated at school the most (about 61%), more than in family, community or circles of friends;
- the terrible effects of social exclusion on LGBT youth (mainly invisibility, mental health issues and living in an insecure, heteronormative environment);
- the actual accounts of young LGBT people in Europe and what their lives as LGBT youngsters represent.

The group then debated on the usefulness of these data, and how it could be used in school student and LGBT activism to convince policy-makers and education professionals to mainstream LGBT rights for the young. Copies of the report were distributed, and an informal discussion went on during the break.

In order to explore LGBT realities further, participants were guided to the ground floor where a stage was set. The principles of the forum theatre methods, inspired by Augusto Boal, were introduced to the participants. All the scenes had been devised by the team in advance, who provided support to the groups as they were thinking about how to present to the rest. The participants

were also explained that the presentation process will be facilitated by the team; the latter wanted all of the participants to have the chance to actively take part in the exercise, through acting out situations without using words, using only their bodies to make statements. As a scene was enacted by a group, the rest of the participants in the audience had the possibility to come up and replace single persons, and act in a different manner.

First Play

“After the election of Sir Gay as a student representative some of the other students ask him to resign.”



Among the proposed solutions were speeches about democracy and the fact that sexual orientation—and identity in general—doesn’t have anything to do with whether one is a good student representative. In another version, the school principal comes and shows that the school is based on anti-bullying and anti-discrimination principles, and therefore such behaviour is not acceptable.

Second Play

“The students in the classroom are reading materials about LGBT youth. The teacher sees this and laughs at the students for being LGBT and for trying to challenge the school system in which no material about LGBT-rights is available. The teacher is laughing despite the fact that she herself is a lesbian.”

Most of the solutions were focusing on the role of the teacher, and they were ranging from the teacher joining the students and throwing away all the old books to the teacher giving a lecture on LGBT rights.



Third Play

“Two guys are talking and a group of girls are laughing at them. The girls start bullying and harassing the boys because they are gay.”

Many of the solutions were based on teachers intervening and taking the names of the bullies, others on students reacting and defending their classmates. Also the police was called in one of the scenarios.



Fourth Play

“The LGBT educator comes in and gives a lecture on LGBT issues. When she leaves the classroom, the class starts harassing a student that they think is gay and put an offensive sticker on him.”

Most of the solutions were focusing on the reactions of the students in the classroom, and it was clear that the participants really expected someone to defend the classmate. Also, the LGBT educator and a teacher were involved in many of the proposed scenarios.

The participants were asked to react immediately when someone in the play was acting against their values, but at the same time they had to stay within the limits of the classroom and the school. According to many of the participants this was difficult, but at the same time it forced them to think a bit further and many of them said that they suddenly saw solutions they had never thought of before.

There was a long and thorough debriefing since many of the plays were difficult to deal with, and were tangent to things participants had experienced in school. For many of the participants, the scenarios reminded them of situations where they had been harassed, had been harassing or maybe just been watching someone being harassed. Many of the participants were also surprised by the roles they chose to play themselves. Still the conclusion was that it was interesting to see what kind of possibilities the school actually provides us with, and what kind of changes one person can make. In the end the discussion was very solution-oriented, and the reflection on policies we should have in our schools started.

Afternoon session

In the afternoon Patrycja Pogodzinska, from the European Court of Human Rights, was invited to give an input about discrimination issues and European laws against it. Article 8 (the right to privacy) and article 14 (anti-discrimination) of the European Convention on Human Rights are the usual articles used by people taking up cases about the violations of their rights because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. A thorough overview of the situation, both in the past and present, was given. The specificities of the European Court and its Convention were also presented, and finally Mr. Pogodzinska defended the Convention as a living instrument, and the Court as a worthy instrument against discrimination once the national ones had been

used. The participants were especially interested in the cases the Court was reviewing at the moment.

The rest of the afternoon was free, so a majority of the participants went to see some of Strasbourg while the team met for preparing further sessions.

Evening session

Dinner was organised in town, and the participants enjoyed typical food from Strasbourg. After dinner the preparatory team had organised an evening out in Strasbourg, followed by most of the participants.

Day 4 – 19th April

Morning session

The study session had reached a stage where it was time to start developing the guidelines for the LGBT-inclusive school policies. The preparatory team had chosen to start the process by dividing the participants into smaller groups, where they were asked to discuss and reflect upon a certain topic. The topics were the following:

1. Safe Learning Environment
2. Human Rights Education
3. Anti-Bullying policy
4. Guidance counsellor
5. Training in LGBT issues
6. Sexual Education
7. Revision of teaching materials and methods
8. Curriculum
9. Interest Groups for Students

Since the participants were supposed to continue working in the same groups there was no presentation of the work done at this point.

After the coffee break the preparatory team had prepared a session on policies – what is a policy and what is it for? With help of a PowerPoint presentation some examples were presented, definitions given and best practice shared. There was also many examples of situations where the school students have managed to change a policy.

Afternoon session

Christian Mollerøp, former OBESSU Board member and President of LLH Oslo, gave a presentation on discrimination in schools. He explained various situations faced by school students which can lead to different types of discrimination—e.g. having homosexual parents—, and make them suffer exclusion and bullying. Mr. Mollerøp especially stressed the role of the teacher as a facilitator in school for increasing tolerance, openness and awareness of LGBT issues.

Rules and laws can be very abstract, but they are also very necessary in the process of policy-making for the protection of LGBT youth. That is why Christian delivered his presentation on *what makes a good policy* regarding LGBT issues in schools. First of all, every school in Europe needs a non-discrimination policy. Good examples, even best practises, were provided by school student and LGBT movements' representatives from the Netherlands, Sweden, the UK and Iceland. But an anti bullying policy cannot be all; the important thing is to stand for this policy as school students. The teachers, whom have a minimum of authority, should also take up their role in promoting such policies.

The participants in the plenary generally agreed on the need for school policies to encompass curriculum and pedagogical methods. That meant, for instance, being critical towards school material, the expectation being that educational institutions have to control the quality of school material and curriculum. LGBT people cannot be excluded from any kind of subject; examples of this include human rights applied to LGBT issues, homosexuality in a historical context, the identity of certain authors, philosophers and thinkers, or contemporary politics and the recent evolution in LGBT rights or the situation in “disadvantaged” countries.. The group explored the fact that there is a significant lack of information on LGBT issues in schools, as well as little information on human rights violations. As students, there is no method which can make one change the curriculum directly, but what one can do is

assist in training the teachers, and look for equality trainings for schools in a broader sense. There was an important discussion with the group on how not to exclude transgender issues in the LGBT debate, which seemed to be difficult. To include lesbian, gay and bisexual issues would be “a good start”, though. It was intended for example to work on conceptual formulations where gay couples are used as examples during maths lessons. For supporting this, year-long processes and mixed working groups should be established in schools. To set up those groups, the teachers should first become more open and inclusive to LGBT issues, and include it as a regular (as opposed to strange, controversial and special) topic. Suggestions were made that IGLYO prepare a useful package on how to include LGBT issues in schools¹. The point of including those issues as soon as in elementary schools was also raised, as many of the attitudes are formed at this stage, and emotional education is also on the hidden agenda of elementary and primary education. This point was not accepted by all. The participants were then informed of many useful publications already existing on the topic, and were encouraged to look for more resources freely available, mainly on the internet.

The participants then analysed how their situation is, or was, at school. They observed both good and bad aspects of their own schooling in relation to LGBT issues, while sharing concrete examples which could be identified in the educational methods. The aim of this session was to analyse given and lived situations in schools, in order to go beyond the experience and observe the educational policy that might have been at the source of what the school did—or did not—do. A few examples were:

- In school books, homosexuality is always described as “different” and abnormal (always referring to homosexual people as “the others”, and alienating homosexuality as a distant reality);
- Few teachers and external educators talk about LGBT issues;
- The situation is even harder in schools based in religious regions that often have no chance to even bring up such issues.

The difference between the approaches was also discussed, as well as how different methods work in some countries and not others, and why.

Talking about the **school community**, the participants concluded that a lot of good practices do exist. Elected or appointed “trust people” are a good example; they work as a base in the school, may be adults and/or young

¹ Note of the rapporteurs: Both IGLYO and OBESSU are working on the guidelines which were drawn from this study session to publish them widely. Contact for this initiative: board@iglyo.com and/or board@obessu.org.

people trusted to listen to any member of the school community coming to them. Teachers and students working together to address the issues is another example of good practice. Psychologists or counsellors going into schools and discussing the issues during school time does not bring an added value in addressing the problems the school students face, as it only brings very little information to the students, and they often don't find appropriate going to an unknown person to talk about sensitive issues. Availability of information must be ensured through various channels. One of the best ways to raise awareness of those issues is a multi-sided dialogue, where parents, teachers and other members of the school community can assist each other in lowering the barriers for young people to talk about their sexuality and private life.

We found out that even though the school systems are different from one another, they have in common the general approach of allowing—or forbidding—discussions about LGBT issues in schools. It is a fact that not all schools provide space for **school democracy**, but nevertheless school students should strive to prove that it is a necessary tool to ensure the well-being of school students within the school environment. Two examples:

- A couple of students wanted to set up a general school club, but they thought they did not fit the criteria necessary to allow them to do so. That scared them from asking about it. (The Netherlands)
- How can people respect and listen to LGBT young people if no-one ever heard of minorities in French schools? They are still taboos for schools, and must be addressed, or even mentioned, in the first place. (France)

Citizenship education is seen as a form of democracy, and that's also why informal and non-formal education should play a bigger role in the educational system. That guides us to raising a point on the necessity to involve non-governmental youth organisations in daily school life and the decision-making process in schools as well as at local, regional and national levels.

Throughout the years, **bullying** has always been present and people are getting tired of talking about it. In many cases, people are also giving up because they think that there will always be bullying because of the way schools and education are dealing with it.

We need to prevent bullying, and find long-term solutions to the problem. In many places across Europe, we need to give more responsibilities to teachers. Prevention work needs to be done at large, and making bullying look “uncool” is a good place to start, according to most participants. To train people to be mediators, to train them to be parents (although this issue was

controversial among participants), to motivate them to be involved and find solutions also constitutes a good practice. In some schools, the end of the week sees an open class talking about the school week, and making people (adults as well as young people) “walk a mile in their shoes”.

‘Parent days’ have to be regularly set up to make sure that parents are involved in the daily school life more, and that they understand the reality of their child better. A constructive answer to bullying could also be peer-led.

Negative experiences of people coming into school trying to **support** brought the group to debate in 5 areas suggested by Christian:

1. **Linking schools and their surrounding communities** Suggesting that if the school sees itself as part of the community, it needs to welcome support from it, and realise it is needed. How can the services help the community?
2. **Who comes in** Seeing that we live in a democracy, we cannot say that people who are against the inclusion of LGBT issues cannot come in, and the expression of plurality of opinions has to be guaranteed. But we can suggest approaches for the people who are allowed to work in the school environment as external partners.
3. **External support** that comes from a critical thinking and human rights-based approaches when a program is agreed to be published and realised. Before handing it out to the class, those should be sensitised for reading it seriously.
4. **The teacher** should be present in the workshop and in the preparation that is to be done before.
5. **School improvement** Cooperation between parents groups, student groups and youth and professional non-governmental organisations.

It was concluded that it is necessary to open up all the institutions with one condition to take human rights as the basis for work in school. Mentioned in so many different contexts, it is difficult to understand whether it is realistic. Trying to understand where the problem lays and who does not have the common aims, three main aspects for defining the future work were stated:

- **Definition** – why it is needed what are we trying to tackle



- **Implementation** – who is going to do it and how – what are we going to do in regards to the school support points
- **Follow-up**

Evening session

A games night was organised for the participants.

Day 5 – 20th April

Morning session

The groups from the day before continued working independently, and with the same topic as the day before.

Different groups came up with different sets of ideas and proposals that were presented to the plenary and are reproduced below:

Group 1

- Start up a Network of LGBT organisations and train people to work on LGBT issues. This type of LGBT network would be important to ensure cooperation between organisations across Europe and experience sharing. Moreover it will be vital in providing training on LGBT issues.
- Create Alliances – not only among LGBT organisations but also looking at Teacher Unions, Amnesty International. Look for ways of how they can be included in schools.
- LGBT course on Teacher Training. Develop Educational Pack for teachers
- Raising Awareness – Campaigns not against discrimination but in favour of Diversity. Looking at diversity issues and raising the awareness
- Teachers as multipliers in the promotion of safe environments. Looking at the inclusion as such.
- Use statistics – and information to show
- Creating a safe learning environment. by including information about all kinds of discrimination and human rights, not only LGBT issues.
- Human rights, what are they? Who has the right to them?
- Anti-bullying policy
- Contract between students parents and teachers
- Implementation and follow up of all the work
- Guidance counsellor trained in LGBT issues, health care, distributing material and information
- Sex education – gender neutral. Discussing heteronormativity, emotions, “what is love”, family constellation etc.

- Revision of teaching materials and methods – LGBT friendly stamp (put some stamps on book which are not homophobic in public library...)- support and promote the authors and the publishers (ex. Promoting them in our web sites)
- Curriculum – include LGBT perspective – history lesson: Oscar Wilde as gay – all grounds of discrimination have to be mentioned (minorities, religious groups, gender...)

Group 2

Students should be involved in all decisions and policy matters that concern them.

1. LGBT education/ minority education

- Awareness raising education (Human Rights Education) for all staff, teachers and all students
- The focus should be on the affective (feeling) domain – emotions, feelings, general relationships
- All students should be empowered to stand up for their own rights, e.g. self-defence classes
- Schools should use appropriate external supports for this training

2. Training and empowerment of activist school students

- Students should be empowered to be involved in all decisions/activities that affect them.
- Through external supports (e.g LGBT groups) the school should empower and support student councils to address LGBT/minority issues
- Activists should be aware of their responsibility to multiply

3. External Supports and Cooperation

- Schools should be responsible for checking all ‘experts’ – student councils should be involved in choosing and evaluating (proofing) the external support used.
- Teachers should do preparation and follow-up and SSU should also be involved
- SSU should be involved in drawing up a list of NGOs that the school can work with
- The school should cooperate with parents of LGBT students; LGBT parents; politicians; ngo’s; mental health institutions, etc.

4. School environment

- There should not be any offending or threatening statements in all part of the school environment
- Graffiti should be deleted within 24 hours
- The school grounds should be safe – supervised
- Visibility !

5. Support for LGBT students

- Individual support
- All students should have access to a person (e.g trust person/counsellor) to speak with one to one
- The trust people should be aware of LGBT issues and make it known that they include lgbt people.
- Should be available during school hours
- Schools could provide safe lgbt web forums
- Student council should include LGBT issues/visibility in planning their work and events
- Group Supports
- Student council should include LGBT issues/visibility in planning their work and events
- Support for alliance between lgbt teachers, lgbt parents and lgbt students and parents of lgbt young people
- Student councils should be supported by school boards and management to set-up lgbt clubs

6. Materials

- Possibility to complain about materials
- Balance between diverse sexual orientations/family/ethnicity, etc
- Get organizations to check school books on lgbt inclusiveness
- LGBT materials in library/anywhere else visible in school
- Involve students (lgbts) in developing materials
- Transversal/cross-curricular materials

7. Visibility

- Every school should remind their students regularly about their policies in different ways, for example by labels, posters, flyers, banners, on websites or information screens.
- School policies are made visible at open days, parent days, etc. Preferably in a positive way – celebrating the diversity of the school.

8. Anti-bullying policies

- Every school should have an anti-bullying policy with all kinds of explicitly mentioned discrimination (including homophobic bullying)
- Every student and staff member should have this policy and respect it.
- Every school should have a book in which students can write down negative or positive experiences.
- The policy should be reviewed annually and the report of this review should be accessible for students as well
- There have to be mediators (school students) in schools

9. Working with parents

- Organising workshops for parents about different issues including LGBT issues
- Have an information evening for parents about both lgbt in general and use this as opportunity to tell them about the policies also.

Group 3

- training for teachers and staff in LGBT issues linking them with human rights training (mandatory for all new teachers and older teachers)
- integrate LGBT inclusive materials, both as part of other materials and as stand alone materials
 - work together in partnership with NGOs to produce these
 - specific LGBT materials made by students to students
 - test these materials for effectiveness
- include teachers in the process of developing lesson plan and materials for the curriculum
- use a variety of teaching materials and methods including videos, running workshops, non-formal education (could be provided by NGOs or by teachers)



- government or schools should support and recognise research which is undertaken to analyse the situation of LGBT students and facilitate schools working with NGOs to do this
- Establish quality criteria by the government or independent body. Government or the independent body shall assess whether these are met in schools
- Involvement of students in preparing videos for the school. These videos should respect the diversity of the students and be LGBT inclusive. This should be “living” and updatable. Every student and parent should sign it when entering in the school
- schools should have a policy of having at least one teacher trained in students counselling who will have the responsibility to follow LGBT issues in specific
 - Anti-bullying policy that is specifically aiming to fight homophobia and transphobia, including all forms of harassment. Recording incidents, create evidence, etc
 - Starting LGBT friends group or clubs, this online, outside or inside schools in order to help LGBT students to meet, to support one another, to exchange ideas and best practices, to plan joint work and make a change.

Group 4

Safe space: space where young people can openly talk about themselves without being afraid of rejection

- trust person, LGBT youth support
- student council
- ombudsperson, mediator
- psychologist

Mainstreaming, making LGBT something usual in society

- talking about it
- addressing the issues through school magazine-media
- get NGOs in schools to talk about LGBT issues
- teachers input – curriculum
- training for all school staff
- public events, living libraries

Access to information

- internet
- printed materials (books, flyers...)
- personal approach

- visible to all students and teachers
- access to correct information
- information should be checked and agreed on by students, students councils...

How to talk about LGBT

- neutral
- inclusive
- not using heterosexist language such as “mother/father” but “parents”, “boyfriend/girlfriend” but “partner”, etc.
- gender neutral green SAM
- presume that not every sam is heterosexual

Bullying

- contact school–parents
- make bullying not cool – it’s not a question of being strong
- parents meeting once per months so that students “behave”
- schools take action in case of bullying

Right to privacy

- not outing students–school staff– teachers
- your own sexuality + gender is a private matter

Group 5

Teaching materials

- Showing different models of family and sexuality.
- European Union develops a book about LGBT issues. (both theoretical and exercises)
- LGBT inclusive books. (examples, pictures)
- Biology books: not based on religion, mentioning sexual diversity and it should be includes transversally and all sexual orientations should be explicitly mentioned at the same level.
- Sexual education shouldn’t be about safe sex only, but also about sexual diversity and it should be compulsory for students.
- History/literature/philosophy should be LGBT inclusive
- In all subjects there should be LGBT examples
- Teaching materials should be continuously revised.
- Ombudsperson or someone else who is available for speaking about (LGBT) issues.

- School community
- Use the “authority” a teacher has in primary school. A 6-year-old person could be more receptive, so stereotypes can be prevented.
- There should be trained psychologists/trust persons in every school. One male and one female.
- Anti-discrimination training should be included in teachers training.
- Parents should be informed about the philosophy of the school.
- Labelling schools as LGBT-friendly (sort of trademark).
- When bullying occurs the school should talk to the parents of the bullyer and the bullied kid.
- Training or information for non-teaching staff.
- Peer-mediation should be promoted and supported.

Anti bullying

- Start teaching kids about bullying when they're very young at primary school.
- Showing them how it is to be a bullyer. (Roll-games etc.)
- Getting ex-bullies into schools to talk to kids.
- Have some kids in school trained to mediate in bullying conflicts.
- Younger kids being taught by kids from higher classes.
- Schools across Europe should have a plan concerning their actions when bullying takes place.
- Advisers to come to school to train teachers and discuss problem. (Supervision).
- Training for teachers how to recognise bullying when it takes place, and react responsibly and accordingly.

Pedagogical methods

- We have to know what teenagers are interested in, so the way things are presented should be interesting.
- Presentations in school should be stimulating .
- Include students in the process of fighting for human rights.
- Website containing information for teachers that they can use in their lessons.

School democracy

- National and local students unions should be recognised.
- School students unions can propose a project to the ministry of education. If the ministry approves and therefore authorises than

other school students unions can do the same projects and their headmasters can't refuse.

- Students have to be a legal part of the school council and they must have the right to vote.

External support

- Schools should have good communication with the community around the school.
- "Week of the LGBT" issues in which LGBT organisations go into schools.
- Have reserved hours in schools in which external support can come into schools and talk about "issues".
- LGBT organisations should provide materials in schools.
- Someone who does a session in a school should keep regular contact afterwards with the teacher.
- NGO's and other organisation should financially support projects that include LGBT issues.

After the work in groups was done the participants met in plenary to discuss all the points of the final draft based on 10 demands that have been commonly expressed and appear in all the groups. After that the whole group agreed on joint recommendations that were to be presented to a round table of experts.

The 10 agreed recommendations there were to be presented the following day were:

- Human rights education as a necessary step in and throughout the curriculum
- Sexual and emotional education – instead that only talking about sex it should be comprehensive of emotions and feelings, so love and not only sex.



- The school curriculum, as well as school books must include LGBT issues in their content as well as in their format.
- Every school should have anti-bullying policy that prevents bullying and gives the instruments to punish the cases of bullying. This document should be updated every year
- Access to information on different levels:
 - counsellors for students
 - community support
 - Internet and printed material with information (brochures, posters..)
 - media: prevention of the creation and implementation of stereotypes through media
 - external support, qualified counsellors which LGBT expertises
- Safe school environment for LGBT students
- Cooperation
 - between ourselves, creating a network
 - with other NGOs
- Democracy: school should be a place where students can take initiatives, write policies, on the curriculum, etc.
- Mainstreaming: LGBT people should not be seen only in the internet, it is fundamental to give visibility to LGBT people in the real and daily life
- Participation

Afternoon session

After the morning session the participants were ready for some feedback on the work done so far. For this purpose a roundtable of experts was pulled together; Jean Philippe Restoueix (CoE DG IV Education), Michael Raphael (campaign manager of “All Different – All Equal”), Patrycja Pogodzinska (European Court of Human Rights) and Isabelle Cruette (local NGO David & Jonathan). The discussion started with the participants presenting the recommendations to the experts and asking for their opinion.

In general the experts were positive, and said that most of the problematic aspects of LGBT issues were included in the 10 points. At the same time, they warned the participants for a perhaps “more complicated reality”, and stressed the importance of having some kind of action plan on how to achieve these things. Teacher training was mentioned several times, as well as the fact that LGBT issues need to be addressed continuously, not only in a certain subject at school. Young people can be as homophobic as adults, therefore we need to find spaces and moments where and when LGBT issues can be given visibility. An example of a rock concert was mentioned.

Also the intercultural challenges one faces when bringing up LGBT issues were highlighted by the experts, and many of them reminded the participants of the different realities in Europe, and the fact that one might need different approaches for different places. Cooperation with different NGOs and youth organisations was seen as crucial, especially in countries where LGBT rights are not recognised yet. The participants were encouraged to network as much as possible—“together we are stronger”!

The participants were also encouraged to use the tools that already exist, such as all the materials the Council of Europe has produced. Also different laws, such as the ones dealing with education and anti-bullying must be made known to student activists, and mentioned in the daily occurrences of fighting bullying. Since the reality is often very different from what the laws are saying, it is important to demand one’s rights be respected. The participation of young people at the local level is a tool in itself, which can be used for LGBT rights.

The preparatory team identified the need for a debriefing after the roundtable, since some of the things the experts said upset the participants. All the participants gathered in a circle outside the plenary room, and were asked to share their feelings. Although they thought it was important to hear what people outside the study session thought, many participants said they were offended by the often too critical and pessimistic approach most experts had. Many also said that it felt like the experts did not see or acknowledge the work that had been done, but rather gave them a lecture in what should be done. Still the participants managed to turn their upset feelings into something positive, getting even more energy to fight for LGBT-inclusive schools. Some of the points raised were also seen as very valuable for the future work.

Evening session

It was a free evening for the participants; for those who wanted there a film was shown, Barakah. Many of the participants chose to go out in Strasbourg.

Day 6 -21st April

Morning session

The last day of the study session was focused on the implementation of the work done and its follow-up. There was a final review of the document with the guidelines and some additions such as a list in the end of the guidelines explaining specific or topical words. After that the study session adopted the

document. In general the participants were very happy with the guidelines, though everybody was aware of the fact that this was only a beginning of a struggle that would continue in schools across Europe. This document was also to be re-worked on to refine, as well as adapt to the different realities throughout Europe. However, a suggested approach was this of an all-inclusive documents listing 10 best approaches for the inclusion of LGBT issues, and the selection of approaches which would work by activists in a given context.

Having the guidelines as the basis for the future work towards LGBT-inclusive schools, the study session used the rest of the day working with its implementation, sharing experiences and ideas. The short DVD "Spell it out" produced by the British NGO Stonewall was shown as an example of what can be done when working with teachers. The video is based on concrete situations in a school, and different solutions are then proposed. The video is done mainly for making teachers aware of the LGBT-aspect. One of the participants wanted to show a music video dealing with homophobia and the influence of popular culture was discussed, as well as the possibilities of taking advantage of it, both when it is LGBT-friendly and when that is not the case.

The 'All Different, All Equal' Campaign of the Council of Europe was thoroughly presented, as a tool to use when dealing with inclusive schools in general. In particular, all the materials that have been produced within the framework of the campaign, such as the Education pack, the Domino and the Compass, were used as examples of helpful tools to use when working in schools. OBESSU informed the participants of the new part of the Campaign, Labelling schools 'All Different, All Equal'. It is a project that OBESSU together with the Council of Europe has launched, in order to be able to work more specifically with schools. The idea is to brand schools that are promoting diversity, human rights and participation.

IGLYO informed the study session of their ongoing project to get the European Parliament to ratify the 'Declaration against Homophobic Bullying', and told the participants what they can do if they want to get involved in the struggle (mainly by getting in touch with IGLYO member organisations in their countries, or promoting their action in schools).

After the coffee break, Isabelle Cruette chaired a session as a representative from the Strasbourg-based NGO David & Jonathan. The organisation is working in schools with awareness-raising and informing school students of LGBT issues, and the preparatory team had invited her to share her experiences of working in schools. Isabelle started with an

introduction to the work she is doing, and explained shortly the working methods of her organisation. The participants were very interested in hearing exactly how she deals with the school, the teachers and the students and asked a lot of questions.

Isabelle highlighted the importance of working in partnership with the teachers, since they are the ones sharing the everyday life with the school students and their ways of dealing with LGBT issues are crucial. At the same time she was stressing the sensitivity of the topic, and mentioned it was good to provide school students with an opportunity to ask questions anonymously, since not all of them feel comfortable posing questions in front of the whole group and their teacher.

The social climate and atmosphere of the classroom was also discussed, as it is extremely important to create a safe space. Isabelle said she often introduced common working rules that everybody has to approve, such as all sitting in a circle on the floor and no one having the right to interrupt anyone. She also prefers people to use the first person when they speak, instead of hiding behind 'people in general'.

The role of media was also discussed, and the power they have to not only focus on the problems in schools but actually bring out good examples of inclusive schools. Since both Isabelle and the participants are from the NGO sector, much of the discussion was about the cooperation between schools and non-governmental organisations. Also the cooperation between organisations working directly with schools, such as school student unions and other organisations, was discussed. For instance school student unions and LGBT organisations could cooperate on issues like the social climate in school.

The session with Isabelle was crucial, as it linked the guidelines and the work of the study session with realities of schools, showing the participants that it is possible to work with LGBT issues in schools. The participants got a safe space where they were able to reflect on methodology to use but also to share their fears and doubts.

Afternoon session

The theme of the last day was follow-up. The participants were given papers in different colours and asked to cut out feet, preferably with their own feet as a model. The yellow foot was representing an action on personal level, a pink one for the organisational level, and a green one was focusing on cooperation with other relevant stakeholders. The participants worked independently, and then presented the actions they wanted to carry out. Some

of the participants from different organisations and even countries were planning to actively cooperate. The feet were then put on the wall, representing the road towards more LGBT-inclusive schools and a brighter future. In this way the participants were encouraged to think in a very concrete way about follow-up and they got quite an overview of the planned actions all over Europe. The feet were later to be sent to the participants by post as a reminder of their commitment to the topic, although they didn't know that at the time of the study session (the feet successfully reached them a month after the end of the event).

There was a short coffee break, and it was then time for the final evaluation of the event. As mentioned before there were evaluation groups meeting every night discussing the day and general feelings. The preparatory team still wanted a common evaluation, gathering all the participants and in that way ending the study session together by reflecting on what had been done. The group gathered in the grass outside the Youth Centre and the CoE-produced 'Blob tree' was used as a method for describing the feelings and opinions about the event. In general the evaluation was very positive, participants saying that they had learned a lot and were eager to go back home and start working. Many also put forward that it every now and then had felt a bit like an emotional rollercoaster, since the topics that were dealt with during the session were sensitive and often very personal. This had given them even stronger insights and motivation for continuing the work.

The evaluation was completed with a written form that all participants were expected to fill in. The team felt it was important to give them the chance to also share thoughts and feelings that are difficult to put forward in a group. The form also gave the team the possibility to ask about more practical issues, such as the accommodation and the practical organisation of the event.

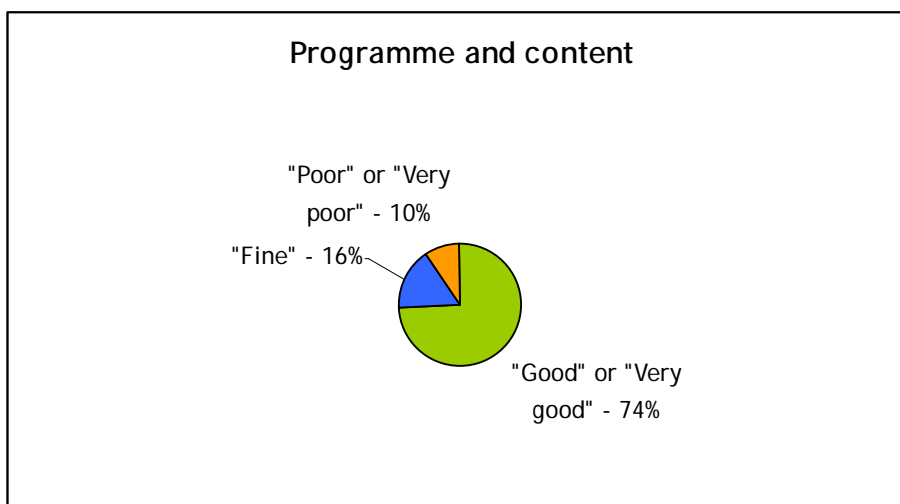
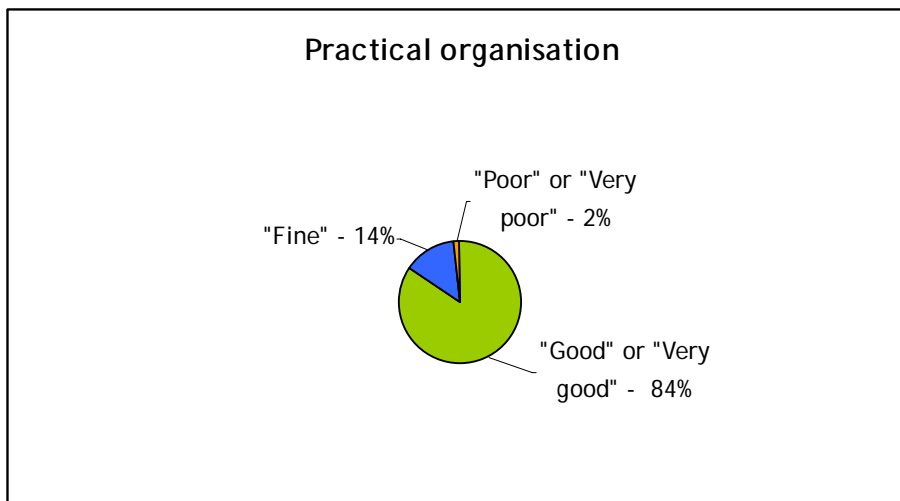
The educational advisor had written the story of the week; putting together some of the highlights of the study session, and the afternoon ended with a team member reading the story and then a PowerPoint presentation with photos taken during the week was shown. In that way the study session ended in a very positive spirit, and the participants started to get ready for the farewell party.

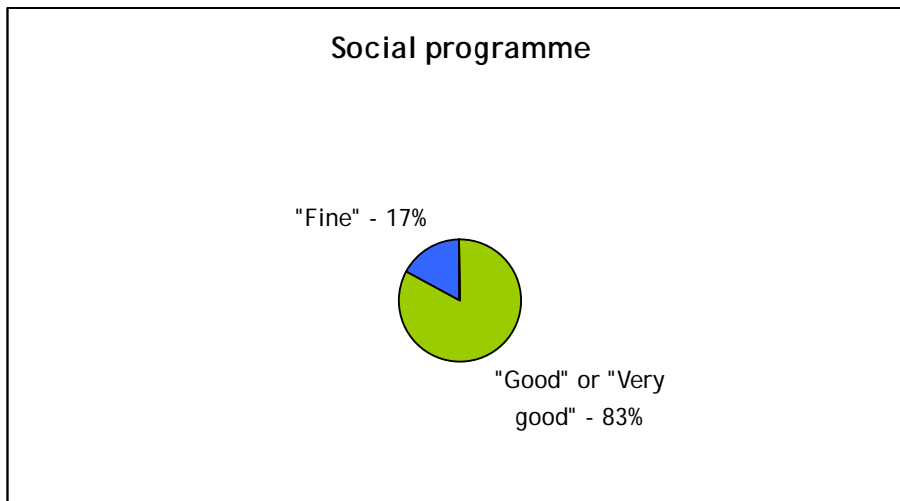
Evening session

In the middle of the week it had been announced that a social committee was needed for organising the farewell party on the last evening. The committee consisted of four participants that were preparing the party. The

preparatory team had prepared certificates that all the participants got during a light ceremony. There were also envelopes on a wall, all the participants having an envelope with their name on, and then the participants could write messages to each other as well as to team members.

6. Evaluation of the study session by the participants





7. Follow-up of the study session by IGLYO and OBESSU

General follow-up

The preparatory team was well aware of the fact that the plans for follow-up were made in a safe space, far away from the reality that the participants actually deal with. Therefore it was even more important to create support mechanisms, making sure that the participants didn't feel like they were left all alone then when they returned to their respective countries. In order to avoid this scenario a common blog was created, where all the participants were invited to write about their experiences in the follow-up, sharing both challenges and best practice.

In general the cooperation between IGLYO and OBESSU has improved since the study session. Both organisations have become much more aware of the LGBT and the school student aspect in their respective work.

Follow-up by OBESSU

OBESSU has continued to work with the labelling of schools 'All Different, All Equal' within the framework of the European campaign. LGBT-related issues play an important role when dealing with diversity, human rights and participation in schools, hence also in the labelling. In the end of spring OBESSU also published an edition of their magazine on homophobia in schools. Much of the content was based on the outcomes of the study session.

Follow-up by IGLYO

IGLYO is following up this study session under two main aspects.

Educational research project

IGLYO is currently undertaking a similar initiative to the ILGA–Europe/IGLYO Social Exclusion report. A steering team as well as an independent researcher are working on a piece of research that will specifically focus on the inclusion or exclusion of LGBT young people throughout Europe. The project, funded by IBM, is to be completed by the end of 2007, and will be widely published and advertised.

Publication of the Guidelines for LGBT-inclusive education

IGLYO is still working on the publication, perhaps jointly with OBESSU, of the ten guidelines for an LGBT-inclusive education that were drafted during this event. They have already been presented at the occasion of external representation, and have enjoyed a very positive reception from both a policy-making, political public, and a crowd of practitioners, such as teachers or educators. IGLYO is planning to transform these guidelines into a reference document for further work in education.

Other related follow-up

Another result of the session was the birth of a Norwegian initiative. LLH Oslo, the organisation of Christian Mollerøp, is applying for funds to organise a follow-up training course in Oslo in early 2008, as a way of going on with the work done in Strasbourg's European Youth Centre. The aim is to further improve the guidelines that were produced at the study session, and dig deeper into the possibilities of working in schools—ranging from awareness-raising activities to teacher's training, all by studying concrete cases in Norwegian secondary schools in the region of Oslo/Åskerus.

Participants list

| Name | Surname | Country | Gender | Organisation |
|-----------|------------------|---------|--------|--------------------------------|
| Adrián | Martínez Pacín | ES | M | CANAE |
| Ásgeir | Guðmundsson | IS | M | HÍF |
| Benjamin | Depinoy | FR | M | UNL |
| Bogdan | Istrate Mihai | RO | M | ACCEPT |
| Céline | Afchain | FR | F | UNL |
| Chiel | Verhoeff | NL | M | LAKS |
| Clara | García Díaz | ES | F | CANAE |
| Colette | Farrugia Bennett | MT | F | MGRM |
| Darren | Vella | UK | M | IGLYO |
| Desislava | Petrova | BG | F | Gemini Bulgaria |
| Eoghan | Howe | IE | M | BeLonG To Youth Project |
| Felix | Schumann | BE | M | OBESSU |
| Ivana | Vukovic | BA | F | Logos |
| José C. | Rueda Sánchez | ES | M | FELGT |
| Julien | Vanhée | FR | M | FIDL |
| Kim | Nygren | SE | F | RFSL Ungdom |
| Linas | Jouzulynas | LT | M | Lithuanian gay league |
| Lúdvik | Hermannsson | IS | M | HÍF |
| Maja | Mjoskerc | SI | M | LEGEBITRA |
| Marta | Skoczowska | PL | F | Amos |
| Marta | Kosinska | PL | F | Amos |
| Martina | Scheggi | BE | F | OBESSU |
| Natasha | Minovska | MK | F | USM |
| Onur | Poyraz | TR | M | KAOS |
| Peter | Dankmeijer | NL | M | Empowerment Lifestyle Services |
| Rafael | Moral Escudero | ES | M | COLEGAS |
| Ruben | Ott | CH | M | USO |
| Sandra | Gowran | IE | F | GLEN |
| Tanjia | Van Veldhuizen | NL | F | LAKS |

Understanding, Developing and Implementing LGBT-inclusive Policies in Schools across Europe · Final agenda OBESSU & IGLYO Study Session · Strasbourg, 15th-22nd April

| Sun. 15th | Mon. 16th | Tue. 17th | Wed. 18th | Thu. 19th | Fri. 20th | Sat. 21st | Sun. 22nd |
|-----------|--|---|---|---|--|--|----------------|
| ARRIVAL | 8.30 Breakfast | 8.30 Breakfast | 8.30 Breakfast | 8.30 Breakfast | 8.30 Breakfast | 8.15 Breakfast | 8.30 Breakfast |
| MORNING | 9.15 Introductions and programme 11.00 Coffee break 11.30 Hopes, fears and expectations; tour of the House | 9.15 Sue Sanders: Norms, Normativity and social exclusion (coffee break inside) | 9.00 Forum theatre 11.30 Coffee non-break: presentation of the IGLYO/ILGA report 12.15 Identifying key policy areas | 9.30 Workshops on key policy areas 11.00 Coffee break 11.30 Presentation of results; "What's a policy for?" | 9.15 Writing guidelines (II) 11.00 Coffee break 11.30 Guidelines wrap-up | 9.15 Lobbying & Campaigning: Spell it Out! DVD, All Different All Equal, More lobbying, European Parliament Declaration 11.00 Coffee break 11.30 Sell you project! | DEPARTURE |
| | 13.00 Lunch | 13.00 Lunch | 13.00 Lunch | 13.00 Lunch | 13.00 Lunch | 13.00 Lunch | |
| | | | | | | | MORNING |

| | | | | | | | | |
|-----------|---------|---|--|--|--|--|--|-----------|
| AFTERNOON | | <p>14.30 Group-building (ingredients: eggs, balloons and gravity)</p> <p>16.00 Coffee break</p> <p>16.30 Exploring L, G, B, T... & S!</p> <p>18.00 Re-groups</p> <p>18.30 Free time</p> | <p>14.30 Understanding concepts</p> <p>16.00 Coffee break</p> <p>16.30 Intercultural learning: get on the train!</p> <p>18.00 Re-groups</p> <p>18.30 Free time</p> | <p>14.00 Input from the European Court of Human Rights</p> <p>15.00 Free afternoon, dinner in town, free evening</p> | <p>14.30 Christian Mollerop: Drafting guidelines</p> <p>16.00 Coffee break</p> <p>16.30 Writing guidelines (I)</p> <p>18.00 Re-groups</p> <p>18.30 Free time</p> | <p>14.30 Roundtable with external stakeholders</p> <p>16.00 Coffee break</p> <p>16.30 School council meeting</p> <p>18.00 Re-groups</p> <p>18.30 Free time</p> | <p>14.30 The next 3 steps</p> <p>16.00 Coffee break</p> <p>16.30 Evaluation of the week</p> <p>18.00 Free time</p> | AFTERNOON |
| | EVENING | <p>19.30 Dinner</p> <p>21.00 Breaking the ice</p> | <p>19.30 Dinner</p> <p>21.00 Scavenger Hunt</p> | <p>19.30 Dinner</p> <p>21.00 <i>Défilé</i>, International Evening</p> | <p>19.30 Dinner</p> <p>21.00 Games night</p> | <p>19.30 Dinner</p> <p>21.00 Movie night/Free evening</p> | <p>19.30 Dinner</p> <p>20.30 Farewell party</p> | |

