

# UNDERSTAND ME! MOM, DAD, TEACHER



*Workshop outline for vocational school teachers*



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# ***Workshop outline for vocational school teachers***

## **1. Introduction**

The workshop outline for vocational school teachers, based on the LGBT+ theme, aims to provide comprehensive knowledge and tools for working with vocational and technical school students, as well as to raise awareness about diversity and the effects of homophobia in the school environment. The introduction to these issues begins with Understanding Diversity, where participants will learn about who LGBT+ people are and receive clear explanations of terms such as sexual orientation and gender identity. Later in the workshop, the definition of homophobia and its emotional and psychological effects on students will be discussed. Teachers will also be introduced to examples of homophobic behaviour that may occur in school, allowing them to better understand and recognise such situations in their daily work.

A key element of the workshop will be working with students belonging to the LGBT+ community, including identifying their needs, creating a safe space in the classroom and effective communication methods adapted to the age of the students. Teachers will learn how to solve problems and how to deal with difficult questions and concerns from students. Talking to parents about 'otherness' will also be an important topic, where participants will learn strategies for dealing with negative reactions and where to refer parents for support.

The workshop will also introduce ways to introduce LGBT+ topics in lessons, emphasising the importance of helping rather than avoiding the topic of 'otherness'. Participants will have the opportunity to discuss the situation of LGBT+ people in Poland, their rights and the role of equality education in practice. The final part of the workshop will discuss methods for creating LGBT+ educational materials, which will allow teachers to integrate this content more effectively into their curricula. This workshop aims not only to increase teachers' competences, but also to promote an open and accepting school environment in which every student feels respected and safe.

### **Training aimed at**

- Teachers of vocational schools
- Educators
- Pedagogues
- All education professionals interested in the topics of diversity and anti-discrimination.



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### **Training objective**

- Increase teachers' knowledge and awareness of LGBT+ people
- Develop the skills to create a safe and supportive space in school for all students.
- Equip teachers with practical tools and methods to talk to students and parents about LGBT+ issues.

### **Expected outcomes after the training:**

- Increase awareness of diversity and the specific needs of LGBT+ students.
- Development of age-appropriate communication skills for students.
- The ability to effectively address discrimination and homophobia at school.
- A better understanding of the teacher's role in creating an inclusive learning environment.
- Ability to have conversations with parents on diversity issues.

### **The implementation of the above workshop outcomes will contribute to**

- Creating more welcoming, open and safe schools where every student, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, will feel accepted and respected.
- Increase student involvement in the educational process by fostering an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect.
- Promote attitudes of tolerance and openness in the school community, which will contribute to reducing conflicts and improving relationships between pupils

### **Questionnaire Annex 1**

## **2. Understanding diversity**

Diversity is a phenomenon that refers to the presence and co-existence of different characteristics, perspectives, experiences and identities within a community or group. In social and educational contexts, diversity encompasses various aspects such as ethnicity, culture, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, economic status, abilities, beliefs and other characteristics that distinguish individuals and groups.

Diversity is a fundamental value in society, as it reflects a wealth of experiences and viewpoints that can enrich mutual understanding and cooperation. In the context of education, the understanding and acceptance of diversity are key to creating an inclusive environment where every student feels accepted and has equal opportunities to develop. In practice, diversity at school means promoting respect, understanding and dialogue between students, teachers and other members of the school community, regardless of their differences.



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Understanding diversity is a key part of working in education, especially in the context of the modern school, where students with different identities, views and experiences come together. Diversity includes not only ethnic, cultural or religious issues, but also differences related to sexual orientation and gender identity. Understanding and accepting these aspects of diversity is essential to creating an educational environment that is safe and supportive for all students. In the context of LGBT+ topics, understanding diversity means recognising that each person has the right to live according to their own identity, without fear of discrimination or exclusion. For teachers, this is a challenge that requires not only knowledge, but also empathy and a willingness to work on one's own prejudices. Understanding diversity is also about being able to see the individual needs of students and being able to support them in the process of self-acceptance. Diversity education promotes openness, understanding and respect for different experiences and perspectives. Students who feel accepted and supported are more likely to openly express themselves and engage in school life. Teachers who understand and promote diversity contribute to a school community where every student, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, feels valued and understood.

### 3. Who are LGBT+ people?

The acronym LGBT+ originated from a social movement that fought and continues to fight for the rights and acceptance of people whose gender identity and sexual orientation differs from the dominant heterosexual and cisgender norms. Originally used, the acronym 'LGB' emerged in the 1980s as a more inclusive term compared to the earlier 'gay', which focused mainly on gay men.

Over time, the 'T' (transgender) was added to the abbreviation to include people whose gender identity differs from the sex assigned at birth. In subsequent years, 'Q' was added to refer to queer people - those who reject traditional gender and sexuality labels, defining their identity in a more fluid and individual way. The '+' sign has been added to include other identities that do not fit into these categories, such as intersex, asexual, pansexual, non-binary and many others. The evolution of this acronym reflects a growing public awareness and a move towards greater inclusivity. LGBT+ is now a widely used term that encompasses a broad spectrum of gender identities and sexual orientations, representing solidarity and support for all people who may experience exclusion or discrimination based on their identity.

#### **Lesbians (L)**

Women who feel emotionally, romantically and/or sexually attracted to other women.

#### **Gay (G)**

Men who feel emotionally, romantically and/or sexually attracted to other men.

#### **Bisexuals (B)**

People who may feel emotionally, romantically and/or sexually attracted to more than one gender.



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### **Transgender persons (T)**

People whose gender identity differs from the sex assigned to them at birth. This includes people who have undergone or are undergoing gender correction, as well as people who identify outside traditional gender categories.

### **Queer**

People who reject the traditional labels of sexual orientation and gender identity, defining their identity in a more fluid and individual way.

### **Intersex persons**

People who are born with gender characteristics that do not fit the typical definitions of male or female bodies.

### **Asexual persons**

People who feel no or limited sexual attraction.

### **Plus (+)**

A designation that includes other identities that do not fit into the L, G, B, T categories, such as pansexuality, demisexuality, non-binary people and many others.

#### 4. Clarification of the meaning of the terms: sexual orientation, gender identity

Sexual orientation and gender identity are two important concepts that help us understand who we are and what attracts us.

Sexual orientation refers to who we feel attracted to - romantically or sexually. It is about who we like and who we would like to form a relationship with. We can be:

- Heterosexual, i.e. attracted to people of the opposite sex (e.g. boy to girl, girl to boy).
- Homosexual, i.e. attracted to people of the same sex (e.g. boy to boy, girl to girl).
- Bisexual, meaning attracted to both the same sex and the opposite sex.
- Pansexual, i.e. attracted to people regardless of their sex or gender identity.

Gender identity refers to how we feel internally about our gender and how we want others to perceive us. It's about whether we feel more like a girl, a boy or perhaps don't identify with traditional gender categories at all. We can be:

- Cisgender, i.e. when one's gender identity agrees with the sex assigned at birth (e.g. a person assigned as a girl at birth who identifies as a girl).
- Transgender, i.e. when one's gender identity differs from the sex assigned at birth (e.g. a person assigned as a boy at birth who identifies as a girl).
- Non-binary or genderqueer, when we do not identify exclusively as male or female, but may be somewhere in between, beyond or in another dimension of these categories.

#### 5. Definition of homophobia

Homophobia is negative attitudes, prejudice or discrimination against people who are or are perceived to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer (LGBT+). It can manifest itself in various forms, such as hate speech, social exclusion, verbal or physical violence, and in the form of unequal treatment and disrespect. Homophobia can stem from ignorance, fear or resentment towards people who differ from societal norms regarding sexual orientation.

#### 6. Examples of homophobic behaviour at school

Homophobic behaviour at school can take many forms, both verbal and physical, and can have serious consequences for the pupils who are the victims. Here are some examples of such behaviour:

**Ridiculing and insults** - Students use derogatory words and epithets such as 'gay', 'lesbian' in a way intended to ridicule or demean others. Example: "You are so gay it makes me want to vomit".



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**Verbal abuse** - Using derogatory or demeaning remarks about sexual orientation or gender identity. Example: "You don't fit in here because you are different/better than the rest".

**Isolation and social exclusion** - Deliberate avoidance and isolation of a pupil because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Example: Not inviting a pupil to class events or group meetings.

**Physical aggression** - Physical abuse or physical violence because of sexual orientation. Example: Pushing, jerking or other forms of physical violence against a student considered 'different'.

**Vulgar graphics and writing** - Drawing or writing offensive comments or symbols on walls, desks or other places in the school. Example: Graffiti on school walls with offensive slogans against LGBT+ people.

**Inappropriate comments and jokes** - Using homophobic jokes or comments that may be hurtful. Example: "This is only for lesbians and gay men, so you don't have to worry about it".

**Exclusion from school activities** - Attempting to exclude a student from participating in group projects, school events or extra-curricular activities because of their sexual orientation. Example: Rejecting a student when assigning roles in group projects or activities.

**Stigmatisation and bullying** - The use of intimidation or stigmatisation of a pupil to create a sense of shame or fear. Example: Threats or convincing other students that contact with an LGBT+ person is 'inappropriate'.

**Lack of acceptance and support from teachers, parents, peers** - Ignoring or downplaying problems, related to discrimination, which can further exacerbate their feelings of exclusion. Example: A teacher fails to respond to a student's complaints about homophobic jokes or bullying. A parent downplays a child's complaints. Peers play down the extent of the bullying.

**Undermining gender identity** - Rejecting or ignoring a student's gender identity, such as not recognising a chosen name or pronouns. Example: Not accepting that a student identifies as non-binary and using inappropriate pronouns.

## Workshop exercise "Understanding and countering Homophobia".

(duration 40 minutes)

**Aim:** To help understand what homophobia is, how to avoid it and why it is important to support LGBT+ people. This exercise aims to increase empathy and understanding among students and/or teachers, and to promote attitudes that support equality and respect for all people, regardless of their sexual orientation.

**Instructions:**

**Introduction:** The facilitator briefly explains the concept of homophobia and gives some examples so that students are clear about what the phenomenon is.

**Group Discussion:** Participants divide into small groups (4-5 people). Each group is given a sheet of paper and pens. The groups' task is to discuss and write down:

- What behaviours might be considered homophobic?
- What feelings might accompany a person who experiences homophobia?

**Presentation and Discussion:** Each group presents their responses. The facilitator summarises the discussions, highlighting key points such as the feelings of those affected by homophobia and the possible consequences of such behaviour.

**Simulation and Reflection:** The facilitator presents situational scenarios on homophobia (attachment 2). Participants work in groups to reflect on how these situations could be resolved and support the person affected by homophobia. Each group presents their ideas for support and solutions.

**Summary:** The facilitator stresses the importance of respect and acceptance and encourages students to act in a supportive and positive way towards LGBT+ people. Participants share their thoughts on the exercise.



## 7. Emotional and psychological impact on students

The emotional and psychological effects on students of being discriminated against and excluded because of their sexual orientation or gender identity can be profound and long-lasting. Pupils who experience such problems can face a number of serious challenges that affect their wellbeing and personal development.

**Feeling isolated** is one of the most common effects of discrimination. Students who are rejected or excluded by their peers because of their sexual orientation or gender identity can feel isolated and alone. Lack of acceptance from peers and teachers can lead to feelings of being 'different' and difficulties in establishing and maintaining social relationships.

**Lowered self-esteem** is a common result of long-term discrimination. Students who are the target of heckling or ridicule may begin to question their self-worth and identity. This can lead to a negative self-image and lower self-esteem, which affects their overall wellbeing and academic performance.

**Anxiety disorders and depression** are other serious psychological effects that can occur for students experiencing discrimination. Chronic stress from constant exposure to verbal or physical aggression can lead to the development of health problems such as anxiety, depression or even suicidal thoughts. Pupils may experience chronic anxiety and sadness that affects their daily functioning.

**Suicidal thoughts** are often the result of deep emotional suffering, which can result from chronic exposure to verbal aggression, ridicule, rejection and isolation. Students who experience such forms of discrimination may begin to see themselves as unaccepted and unwanted, leading to feelings of hopelessness and meaninglessness. Suicidal thoughts can be a way of coping with chronic emotional pain when students feel they have no other ways to improve their situation.

**According to a report covering 2019-2020 by the Campaign Against Homophobia, 74 per cent of LGBT+ people surveyed who are in school have experienced suicidal thoughts**

**Sleep and concentration problems** can also result from the emotional burden of discrimination. Pupils may find it difficult to fall asleep, wake up at night with anxiety, and experience problems concentrating during lessons, which affects their school performance and overall engagement in learning.

**Behavioural disorders** are another possible emotional outcome. Pupils who experience discrimination may express their emotions through aggression, defiance or other difficult-to-manage behaviour, further complicating their school and social situation.

**Difficulties in building healthy relationships** may stem from negative experiences of discrimination. Students may find it difficult to trust others and to form lasting and supportive relationships, which affects their ability to form friendly and healthy interpersonal bonds.



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## 8. How to work with a student belonging to the LGBT+ community?

When working with a pupil or student from the LGBT+ community, it is crucial to create a safe and supportive environment that fosters their personal and social development. At this age, young people are going through an intense period of identity development and support during this time is particularly important. It is important to actively listen and show empathy. These students may be experiencing difficulties related to social acceptance and personal challenges related to gender identity or sexual orientation. It is important to talk openly and honestly with students, ensuring that their feelings and experiences are valid and treated with respect. Successfully having conversations and building trust can help students feel safer. Another key aspect is creating a safe space in the classroom. It is important to ensure that discrimination or verbal abuse has no place in the school. This can be achieved by introducing rules of equality and respect in the classroom, and ensuring that any form of homophobia is dealt with immediately and consistently. Setting clear rules about acceptance and respect for all students is essential. Education and sensitivity is another key task. Students should be educated about the diversity of gender identities and sexual orientations in an age-appropriate manner. This will help build greater understanding and acceptance among peers, which can reduce the risk of exclusion and violence. Individual support is equally important. Working with a school psychologist or educator can help students cope with emotional and social problems that may arise from their sexual orientation or gender identity. These individuals can also act as mentors, helping students to develop as individuals and cope with difficulties. Promote positive roles and representations in educational materials. Making sure that diverse sexual identities and orientations are included in textbooks and other school materials will help students to see themselves and their experiences in a positive light.

Finally, encouraging involvement in support groups or student equality organisations can be beneficial. Getting involved in such groups will help students build a support network and sense of belonging at school.

### **Workshop exercise: "Creating a Safe Space".**

(duration 30 minutes)

Purpose of the exercise: To help teachers learn how to create a safe and supportive space for students belonging to the LGBT+ community. This exercise aims to help teachers understand what steps they can take to make their classroom a safe space for all students, including those from the LGBT+ community.

Introduction: The facilitator introduces the purpose and importance of creating a safe space for LGBT+ students at school to participants in the exercise.

Group division: Workshop participants are divided into groups of 4-5 people.

Assignment of tasks:

Each group is given one of the following scenarios to discuss:



Scenario 1: A class in which an LGBT+ student experiences ridicule and homophobic jokes.

Scenario 2: An LGBT+ student feels excluded from their peer group and is not invited to class events.

Scenario 3: The teacher does not react to displays of discrimination in the classroom.

Scenario 4: An LGBT+ student is struggling with personal issues and needs emotional support.

Working in groups:

Groups discuss their scenarios and then develop ideas on how to create a safe and supportive space for students in the situations presented. Each group develops an action plan, which may include changes in teacher attitudes, classroom rules, actions to support students and how to respond to homophobia.

Presentation and discussion:

Groups present their ideas and plans in front of the rest of the participants.

The facilitator moderates a discussion in which different approaches and strategies are discussed.

Summary:

The facilitator summarises the key findings of the exercise and discusses how similar strategies can be implemented in everyday work with students.

## 9. Identifying the needs of LGBT+ students

Identifying the needs of LGBT+ students is a key aspect of a teacher's work in providing appropriate support and creating a safe learning environment. In theory, this process involves several important steps and strategies to effectively identify and meet the needs of students from this community.

### **Contextual Understanding and Individual Needs:**

LGBT+ students may have different needs that stem from their unique experiences of gender identity and sexual orientation. Identifying these needs requires a contextual understanding, i.e. how the school and social environment affects their lives. Both individual and social aspects need to be considered, such as peer relationships, family support and the presence or absence of acceptance in the school environment.

### **Safe Environment:**

One of the key aspects of recognising the needs of LGBT+ students is creating a safe and supportive school environment. These students may experience fear of discrimination, exclusion or violence. Teachers need to identify whether students feel safe in school and in the classroom, and what needs they have to protect their identity and provide emotional support.





**Communication and Openness:**

Recognising the needs of LGBT+ students also requires the ability to have open and supportive conversations. Teachers should create an atmosphere where students feel comfortable sharing their concerns and needs. This may include holding individual meetings or support groups where students can talk freely about their experiences and feelings.

**Monitoring and Evaluation:**

Regular monitoring and assessment of the situation of LGBT+ pupils is key to identifying their needs. Teachers should pay attention to changes in pupils' behaviour, academic performance, relationships with peers and general wellbeing. If signs of problems are noted, such as lowered self-esteem, learning difficulties or conflicts with other students, teachers should seek to understand the source of these problems and tailor support to individual students' needs.

**Collaboration with the Family and Professionals:**

Collaboration with students' families and professionals, such as psychologists or school counsellors, is essential in identifying and meeting the needs of LGBT+ students. Parents can provide valuable information about their students' needs and concerns, and professionals can offer additional support and advice.

**Education and Resources:**

Teachers should also be well informed about available resources and support programmes for LGBT+ students. Knowledge of organisations, support groups or school programmes on diversity and inclusion can help to effectively identify and meet the needs of students.

**Workshop Exercise: Recognising the Needs of LGBT+ Students**

(duration 30 minutes)

Purpose of the Exercise:

Helping teachers to practically recognise and understand the needs of LGBT+ students, as well as developing skills to create support in the school environment. Participants gain practical skills in recognising the needs of LGBT+ students and creating supportive strategies, enabling them to be better prepared to work in a diverse school environment. The exercise also encourages collaboration and sharing of experiences in creating a supportive environment for all students.

Introduction:

The facilitator briefly explains the purpose of the exercise, highlighting the importance of recognising the needs of LGBT+ students and how this contributes to creating a supportive school environment.



### Presentation of Scenarios:

The facilitator presents participants with a set of situational scenarios about LGBT+ students in different school situations.

### Scenarios:

- The pupil is uncomfortable with diversity education classes.
- The student experiences ridicule from her peers because of her gender identity.
- The LGBT+ student avoids contact with the teacher, fearing discrimination.
- The pupil is withdrawn when interacting with peers fearing stigmatisation.

### Working in Groups:

Participants divide into groups and each group is given one scenario. The groups analyse the situation and discuss the student's possible needs and ways of support. They should pay attention to:

- Potential emotions and concerns of the student
- Safety and acceptance needs
- Educational and emotional support needs

### Presentation of Solutions:

After the group work, representatives from each group share their findings and ideas for supporting the student described in the scenario.

### Summary and Reflection:

The facilitator summarises the presentations, highlighting common findings and key elements of effectively identifying the needs of LGBT+ students. Encourages participants to reflect on what new things they learned during the exercise and how they can apply this knowledge to their work.

## **Workshop Exercise: Survey of Pupils on Their Needs**

(duration 10 minutes)

### Purpose of the Exercise:

To gather information from students about their needs and concerns about their identity and support in the school environment. The survey is designed to allow students to express their opinions and needs in a safe way.

Preferred method, online survey.

### Instructions to Students:

Please answer the following questions honestly and accurately. Your answers are anonymous and are intended to better understand your needs and how we can improve our school environment to be more supportive and inclusive.



1. What are your main concerns about your sexual identity or orientation at school?
2. Do you feel that you have support from your teachers regarding your gender identity or sexual orientation? If yes, in what way?
3. In what situations do you feel most comfortable or uncomfortable at school?
4. What changes in the school environment could make you feel more accepted?
5. Do you feel comfortable talking about your gender identity or sexual orientation with your peers? Why yes or why no?
6. What support, if any, would you like to receive from your class or school?
7. What aspects of your daily interaction with other students do you find difficult or stressful?
8. Do you have access to information on gender identity and sexual orientation? What additional information would be helpful to you?
9. Have you experienced discrimination or exclusion at school in the past? If yes, describe how this has affected you.
10. What actions could the school take to better support students from different identity backgrounds?
11. What qualities should a teacher have in order to effectively support LGBT+ students?
12. Are there specific resources or programmes that could help you in school? Which ones?
13. Do you feel adequately represented in the educational materials or curriculum? If not, what could change?
14. What are your expectations of the school in terms of promoting diversity and inclusion?
15. Do you feel that your emotional needs are being met at school? If not, what could improve?
16. What changes in school daily life would be most positive for you?
17. Do you have ideas on how the school could better deal with discrimination issues?
18. What topics related to gender identity or sexual orientation would you like to see covered in the classroom?
19. Do you have any concerns about your privacy at school in terms of your identity?
20. What additional support could help you to function better in the school environment?



## 10. Creating a safe space in the classroom

In a classroom where students feel safe, they can express themselves freely, share their thoughts and feelings and develop their skills in a supportive environment. For LGBT+ students, providing such a space is particularly important so that they can feel accepted and supported. Here are some key principles and actions that can be taken to create a safe space in the classroom:

**Introduce Rules of Respect and Cooperation:** At the beginning of the school year, it is useful to establish rules with students about mutual respect, tolerance and cooperation. These rules should make it clear that all forms of discrimination, including homophobia and transphobia, are unacceptable.

**Diversity Education:** Regularly introducing diversity topics, including gender identity and sexual orientation, in the curriculum helps to increase awareness and understanding. Educational materials should be age-appropriate for students and present diversity in a positive way.

**Open Communication:** Encouraging pupils to be open and allowing them to express their thoughts and concerns is key. Teachers should be accessible to students, ready to listen to their concerns and provide support, and regularly organise activities that allow students to discuss issues that are important to them.

**Setting Supportive Symbols:** Placing symbols in the classroom that support diversity, such as LGBT+ flags, posters promoting equality and acceptance, can help create an atmosphere where students feel accepted and supported.

**Staff Training:** Regular training for teachers and school staff on LGBT+ issues and how to provide support for LGBT+ students can help build a more responsive and educational school environment.

**Conflict and Violence Management:** Clear procedures should be put in place to respond to incidents of violence, bullying and discrimination in the classroom. Each incident should be dealt with quickly and effectively and students should know where to report their concerns.

**Supportive Programmes and Clubs:** Organising additional programmes and clubs, such as support groups for LGBT+ students or equality clubs, can create additional space for students where they can share experiences and support each other.

**Personalised Support:** Understanding and addressing the individual needs of LGBT+ students and tailoring support to their specific requirements is key. Teachers should be ready to talk to and provide support according to each student's needs.

**Modelling Positive Behaviour:** Teachers should be role models of respect, empathy and acceptance. Their own behaviour and communication influences the classroom atmosphere and can promote positive attitudes among students.

**Providing Access to Resources:** Enabling students to access educational resources, guidance and organisations that support LGBT+ people is important to provide them with support and information that can help them in their daily lives.



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## 11. How to talk to students about LGBT+ issues?

Talking about LGBT+ with students is extremely important, as it is during this period of students' lives that they begin to develop their sense of identity and sensitivity to social diversity. Introducing LGBT+ topics into school discussions can help students to better understand themselves and others, and to develop attitudes based on acceptance, respect and equality. Teachers should approach this topic with openness, sensitivity and understanding, adapting the way they communicate to the age and maturity level of the students. During such conversations, it is crucial that the teacher creates a safe and supportive environment in which students feel comfortable expressing their thoughts and questions. It is useful to start by explaining basic concepts, such as sexual orientation and gender identity, in an accessible and neutral way. It is important to avoid judging or imposing one's own views; instead, it is useful to focus on facts and to convey knowledge about the diversity of human experience. It is also important for the teacher to be ready to answer students' questions, even difficult or awkward ones, with respect and empathy, always bearing in mind that what may seem obvious to adults may be new and questionable to young people.

Teachers should also be aware that in any classroom there may be students who identify as LGBT+ or have people from this community in their family or friends. Therefore, conversations about this topic should be conducted in an inclusive and supportive way, taking into account the feelings of all students. It is equally important that the teacher is attentive to the language used by both him/herself and the students - avoiding stereotypes and phrases that may be perceived as discriminatory or stigmatising is key to building an atmosphere of respect. Conversations about LGBT+ can also be an excellent opportunity to promote values such as equality, tolerance and empathy. Teachers can engage students in discussions about human rights, acceptance of diversity and anti-discrimination, which can help to foster more open and informed attitudes among young people.

### **Workshop exercise:**

(duration 30 minutes)

**Aim:** To understand diversity and develop empathy towards LGBT+ people. This exercise aims not only to familiarise participants with basic concepts related to LGBT+, but also to develop attitudes based on acceptance and respect for diversity. Through group work and a creative task, participants have the opportunity to express their views, which fosters empathy and understanding.

**Materials:**

Coloured sheets of paper

Pens

Large sheet of paper

Introduction





The facilitator starts with a brief introduction about diversity and explains why it is important to respect and accept all people, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

#### Exercise:

Participants are divided into two asses. Each group is given coloured sheets of paper and markers. The task for each group is to create a poster outlining what 'respect for diversity' means to them. The poster can include drawings, slogans or symbols that the participants consider important in the context of acceptance of diversity, including diversity related to sexual orientation and gender identity.

#### Discussion:

Once completed, each group presents their poster to the forum. The presenter moderates a short discussion, asking questions such as: "What does respect for others mean to you?" or "Why is it important for us to accept diversity at school?". The aim is to encourage participants to reflect and share their thoughts.

## 12. Age-appropriate communication methods

Communication about LGBT+ people in school needs to be age-appropriate, especially for vocational students. During this period, young people are at the stage of forming their identities and understanding complex social issues, so the way in which teachers convey information is crucial.

**Age-appropriate language:** students need simple, understandable explanations about gender identity and sexual orientation. Avoid complicated terms and focus on accessible definitions. It is important that communication is non-judgmental and neutral, helping students to understand that diversity is a natural part of society.

**Empathy and understanding:** At this age, young people start to become more aware of the differences between themselves and others, which can lead to questions, doubts and sometimes fears. The teacher should conduct conversations in an empathetic way, allowing students to express their feelings and concerns, and respond to them in a supportive way. It is important that each student feels safe and understood.

**Avoiding stereotypes:** Care should be taken to ensure that the content communicated does not perpetuate stereotypes about LGBT+ people. Communication should emphasise individuality and diversity, and explain that sexual orientation and gender identity are just one of many aspects that define a person.

**Building a safe space:** teachers should create an environment where students feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and feelings about LGBT+. A safe space means that all students, regardless of their identity, are respected and supported.

**Interactivity and engagement:** Communication methods should engage students and encourage them to actively participate in the conversation. Open-ended questions, group discussions and joint consideration of problems promote the development of critical thinking skills and foster an atmosphere of openness and mutual respect.

### Workshop exercise: Practising communication methods in dialogue

#### "Simulated conversation with students"

(duration 20 minutes)

Objective of the exercise: To practice effective age-appropriate communication methods for students in the context of LGBT+ topics. This exercise allows teachers to practise and consolidate effective communication methods with students on LGBT+ topics, enabling them to be better prepared to talk about this sensitive topic in the actual classroom.

### Instructions:

**Role-playing:** Workshop participants are divided into pairs. In each pair, one person plays the role of the teacher and the other plays the role of a student who has questions or concerns about the LGBT+ topic.

**Conversation simulation:** "Student" asks questions or expresses their concerns about LGBT+. "Teacher" responds using the communication methods discussed earlier, such as plain language, empathy and active listening.

**Changing roles:** After a few minutes, the roles in pairs change so that each participant has a chance to experience both roles.

**Discussion:** After the simulation, pairs discuss their experiences. The discussion should focus on which communication methods were effective and why, and what difficulties they encountered during the conversation.

**Group feedback:** the whole group of participants shares their reflections on the exercise and the workshop leader summarises, pointing out best practice and areas for improvement.

**Materials:** Sample question cards (Appendix 3)



### 13. How to solve problems

Dealing with problems in the classroom, especially those involving LGBT+ students and their relationship with their peer group, requires sensitivity, understanding and effective intervention strategies. Below I outline theoretical and practical approaches to dealing with such situations.

Theoretical approach to problem solving

**Empathy and understanding:** The teacher should show empathy and understanding towards the feelings of all students, especially those who are at risk of discrimination or exclusion. It is important that the teacher is aware of his or her own prejudices and tries to avoid them.

**Education and awareness:** Making students aware of the diversity of sexual orientations and gender identities is crucial. Providing accurate information can help dispel myths and prejudices that are often a source of conflict.

**Creating a safe space:** It is important that students feel safe and know that they can turn to the teacher with problems. The teacher should promote a culture of respect and openness in the classroom.

**Intervention in conflict situations:** The teacher should be prepared to intervene in situations where LGBT+ students are discriminated against or harassed. Intervention should be immediate and firm, with a clear message that such behaviour is unacceptable.

**Emotional and psychological support:** Providing emotional and, if necessary, psychological support for LGBT+ students is essential. The teacher should be aware of available resources, such as school psychologists or LGBT+ support organisations.

Practical steps and interventions

**Talking to students:** In cases of conflict, it is important to talk to both the LGBT+ student and the peer group. It is important that everyone has the opportunity to express their feelings and concerns in a safe atmosphere.

**Mediation:** Introducing mediation, in which a neutral person (e.g. a teacher or school counsellor) helps to resolve the conflict, can be effective. Mediation should focus on mutual understanding and finding a solution that satisfies all parties.

**Workshops and exercises:** Organising workshops on diversity and acceptance can help students better understand and accept each other's differences. Such workshops can include empathy exercises, role-playing and LGBT+ education.

**Consequences for discrimination:** Students need to be aware that discrimination and bullying have consequences. The school should have a clear policy on such behaviour and procedures for dealing with it.



**Promoting positive role models:** Teachers and students should be encouraged to promote positive role models. Teachers can emphasise values such as respect, empathy and acceptance.

### **Workshop exercise "The role of the spectator"**

(duration 30 minutes)

**Aim:** To make students aware of the role they can play as witnesses to discrimination. This exercise can help students understand that they have the power to influence the atmosphere at school and support their fellow students.

**Instructions:**

The trainer presents a hypothetical situation (Annex 4)

Participants divided into two groups take on the role of students, they are given a task: to work out as witnesses (other students, teachers) how they can react to support an LGBT+ student and stop the discrimination.

After discussion, the groups present their ideas.

Summarise and reflect on what the long-term effects of witnesses' actions or inactions may be.

## 14. Resolving difficult questions and concerns

Addressing difficult questions and concerns in the context of LGBT+ topics is a key part of a teacher's job, where students may ask questions that stem from their natural curiosity, but also from incomplete knowledge or heard stereotypes. The teacher needs to be prepared for such questions in order to answer them in a substantive, supportive and safe way for all students.

It is a good idea to start by creating an open atmosphere in which students feel free to ask questions. The teacher should be empathetic, avoid judgement and welcome all questions with respect, even if they may sound controversial or inappropriate. In such situations, instead of reacting emotionally, it is useful to say thank you for the question, which gives students the feeling that their curiosity is normal and that they can safely express their thoughts.

The teacher should then give an answer that is both understandable and factually correct. It is advisable to avoid complicated language and instead use simple but precise explanations. You should also be prepared for the fact that some questions may require a longer answer or further discussion. In such cases, you can offer to continue the conversation in a more conducive setting, for example, after school or during a special class on the topic.

If there are questions or comments that may be hurtful to LGBT+ students, the teacher should respond quickly to explain why such comments can be harmful and why it is important to respect diversity. This may also be a good time to discuss with the class what the effects of homophobia are and how such behaviour can be countered.

### **Workshop exercise: "Difficult questions".**

(duration 30 minutes)

**Aim:** To help teachers address students' difficult questions and concerns about LGBT+. These questions can help teachers prepare for conversations with students about LGBT+ issues, as well as foster an open and supportive atmosphere in the classroom.

**Running the exercise:**

The facilitator divides participants into groups of 4-5.

Each group is given a sheet of paper with a difficult question written on it for the pupils to ask (Appendix 5)

The group is tasked with developing a response that is both substantive and age-appropriate for the students.

Each group presents its answers. The facilitator discusses the answers, highlighting strengths and what could be improved.



Conclusion: The facilitator summarises the exercise, emphasising that the key to successfully addressing difficult questions is to be prepared, empathetic and open to dialogue with students.

## 15. How to talk to parents about the 'problem' of otherness?

Talking to parents about their child's 'otherness', especially in the context of sexual orientation or gender identity, can be difficult and sensitive. It requires empathy, understanding, as well as communication skills from the teacher to help alleviate parents' concerns and support them in the acceptance process.

The first step is to prepare for the interview. The teacher should gather all the necessary information that can help to understand the child's situation. It is important to be aware that for many parents this can be a new, difficult and anxiety-provoking topic. Therefore, a compassionate and respectful approach is key. During the conversation itself, it is helpful to start by creating a safe space where parents can freely express their thoughts and emotions. The teacher should listen carefully, without interrupting, and try to understand the parents' point of view. It is good if the conversation starts with a positive aspect, such as discussing the child's strengths, before moving on to a more difficult topic. When it comes time to discuss the topic of otherness, the teacher should emphasise that diversity is a natural part of human life, and that being part of the LGBT+ community is not a problem, but one of many possible forms of identity. It is useful at this point to use solid information and facts that can help allay some of the parents' fears. If parents express concerns or negative emotions, the teacher should remain calm and empathetic. It is important not to judge their reactions, but rather to try to understand where these feelings are coming from. It could be a fear of social rejection, a lack of knowledge about LGBT+, or fear for the child's future. In such situations, it is useful to reassure parents that the school is a place where every child is accepted and supported. The teacher should also be ready to answer any questions parents may have, and if they do not know the answers, they can offer to seek information together or make referrals to professionals, such as the school psychologist or organisations that support LGBT+ families. At the end of the conversation, it is good to emphasise that the teacher's aim is to support both the child and the family, and that he or she is always available for further discussion if necessary. It is also important for parents to know that they are not alone and that there are many resources they can use to better understand and support their child. Talking about 'otherness' should be seen as an opportunity to build bridges and understanding, rather than as a confrontation. Through the right approach, the teacher can help parents in the process of accepting and supporting their child through the difficult period of adolescence.

### **Workshop exercise: Simulated conversation with a parent about a child's 'otherness'**

(duration 30 minutes)

Purpose of the exercise: To enable teachers to practise talking to parents about their child's sexual orientation or gender identity, including empathy, communication and dealing with difficult situations.

Workshop participants will be divided into pairs.

Each pair is given one of the topics to simulate a conversation (Appendix 6). One participant plays the role of the teacher and the other the role of the parent.

After practising each simulation, the groups present their findings and the difficulties they encountered to the rest of the workshop participants.

Each presentation is followed by a discussion and reflection on effective communication techniques and possible improvements.

## 16. Dealing with negative parental reactions

Dealing with negative parental reactions, especially in the context of issues related to students' sexual orientation and gender identity, requires sensitivity, empathy and communication skills. Here are key principles and techniques that can help teachers manage such situations effectively:

### Understanding and Empathy

**Empathy and understanding:** When a parent expresses negative emotions or concerns about their child's sexual orientation or gender identity, it is important for the teacher to show understanding of their feelings. Parents may react negatively due to fear, lack of knowledge or prior beliefs. Expressing understanding of their concerns is key, even if we disagree with them.

### Communication

**Active listening:** Allowing parents to express their concerns and ensuring they are listened to without interruption can help ease tension. Active listening shows that their views are taken into account.

**Using plain language:** When discussing LGBT+ issues, it is helpful to use clear and simple language, avoiding terminology that may be unfamiliar or confusing to parents. This helps to avoid additional misunderstandings and improves communication.

**Providing accurate information:** The teacher should be prepared to provide facts and data about LGBT+ that can help dispel myths and parental concerns. It is useful to use reliable sources and educational materials.

### Conflict management

**Remaining calm:** When faced with negative responses, it is important that the teacher remains calm and does not react emotionally. Responses should be thoughtful and substantive, not defensive.

**Seeking common ground:** The teacher should try to find common goals and values, such as child welfare or school safety. Identifying common goals can help build bridges and solve problems.

**Offering support:** It is useful to offer parents support in the form of meetings with the school counsellor, participation in parent support groups or educational materials. This helps to provide them with the tools to better understand the situation.



## 17. Where to refer parents for help?

Organisations and foundations

### **Campaign Against Homophobia (KPH) Foundation**

Address: Kłopotowskiego Street 6/8, 03-717 Warsaw

Website: [kph.org.pl](http://kph.org.pl)

Description: KPH offers support to LGBT+ people and their families, including organising support groups for parents and various trainings and workshops on LGBT+ rights.

### **The "Love Does Not Exclude" Foundation**

Address: 27 Hoża Street, 00-521 Warsaw

Website: [mnw.org.pl](http://mnw.org.pl)

Description: The foundation offers psychological support and counselling for LGBT+ people and their families. It also organises information meetings and workshops for parents.

### **Trans-Fusion Foundation**

Address: 1 Jasna Street, 00-013 Warsaw

Website: [transfusion.org](http://transfusion.org)

Description: The foundation specialises in supporting transgender people and their families. It offers consultation and psychological support and organises support groups for parents of transgender students.

### **The Culture of Equality Foundation**

Address: 14 Krakowska Street, 31-062 Krakow

Website: [kulturarownosci.org](http://kulturarownosci.org)

Description: The Foundation works on behalf of LGBT+ people and organises various events and educational programmes. It offers support for LGBT+ people and their families, including support groups and workshops.

### **Everything's Play Foundation**

Address: 12 Świętej Gertrudy Street, 31-048 Kraków

Website: [wszystkogra.org.pl](http://wszystkogra.org.pl)

Description: The Foundation focuses on promoting diversity and inclusion. It offers educational programmes and support for LGBT+ people and organises events and workshops for families.



### **Podkarpackie Centre for Mental Health**

Address: 5 Grunwaldzka Street, 35-039 Rzeszów

Website: [pczp.pl](http://pczp.pl)

Description: The centre offers psychological and therapeutic help, including support for LGBT+ people and their families. They specialise in tailoring support to individual needs.

Helpline for pupils and young people Give Children Strength

Daily, 24 hours a day, 116 111

### **Helpline for LGBT+ people and their relatives Lambda Warsaw**

Monday-Friday, 18:00-21:00, 22 628 52 22

### **National Helpline for Victims of Family Violence Blue Line**

Daily, 24 hours a day, 800 120 002

### **Crisis Hotline Institute of Health Psychology**

Daily, 24 hours a day, 116 123

### **Antidepressant Forum Anti-Depression Phone Line**

Wednesday-Thursday, 5pm-7pm, 22 594 91 00

### **ITAKA Youth Helpline**

Monday - Friday, 12:00 - 20:00, 22 484 88 04



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## 18. Bringing LGBT+ issues closer to the classroom

Bringing the topic of LGBT+ into the classroom in a way that is appropriate for students requires care and a well thought-out strategy. A key objective is to create an atmosphere of openness and acceptance in the classroom and to provide students with knowledge that will help them understand diversity and respect others. Here's how to effectively integrate LGBT+ topics into lessons:

### 1. introduction to the subject

It is important that the topic of LGBT+ is introduced naturally and adapted to the developmental level of students. Topics such as diversity, equality and acceptance can be woven into different subjects, such as social studies, literature or history classes. Teachers should present these issues in a general context, without putting students in a situation that might be uncomfortable for them.

### 2 Integrating Themes into the Curriculum

It is worth introducing LGBT+ elements into the curriculum in a way that is compatible with the subjects taught at school.

**Literature:** analysis of books and stories that deal with issues of sexual and gender diversity. Examples include books that feature LGBT+ characters or issues of self-acceptance.

**History:** Discuss the history of the LGBT+ rights movements, significant figures and events that have influenced the fight for equality.

**Civic education:** Introducing the theme of human rights, diversity and equality in society, emphasising the importance of respect for all individuals.

### 3 Application of the Principles of Equality and Acceptance

Teachers should use a variety of teaching methods that promote understanding and acceptance:

**Group tasks:** Students can work in groups on projects related to diversity and equality. For example, they can create posters or presentations on equal rights.

**Discussions:** Organise diversity discussions where students can share their thoughts and questions in a safe and supportive environment.

**Stories and case studies:** presenting real stories of LGBT+ people or simulating scenarios that can help students understand the challenges faced by LGBT+ people.

### 4 Educational Resources

Use available educational resources such as books, documentaries and articles that present LGBT+ issues in an accessible way. It is useful to use materials that are age-appropriate and support students' understanding.

### 5 Culture of the School

Creating a culture in school where diversity is celebrated can help students understand and accept LGBT+ topics. This can be achieved by organising school events such as equality days, workshops or presentations that promote respect and understanding.





## **Workshop exercise: "Diversity Project".**

(duration 40 minutes)

Objective of the exercise: To raise awareness of sexual and gender diversity and promote acceptance through creative collaboration. The aim is to help teachers understand how diversity can be woven into teaching in a way that engages and supports students, while promoting an atmosphere of acceptance and equality in the classroom.

Group division: Workshop participants will be divided into groups of 4-5 people. Each group will be given a topic related to diversity (attachment 7)

Preparing the project: Groups have 20 minutes to create a project in the form of a poster, presentation or short skit that introduces their topic. Encourage participants to use creative methods such as drawings, quotes or short role plays.

Presentation: Once prepared, each group presents their project in front of the rest of the participants. During the presentation, groups should explain how their project contributes to increasing understanding and acceptance of LGBT+ people.

Reflection: At the end of the workshop, the facilitator includes a discussion where participants can share their thoughts on what they have learned and how the skills they have acquired can be used with their students.

## 19.LGBT+ in Poland: Discussion

In Poland, the topic of LGBT+ is one of the more controversial and sensitive social issues. In the country, the LGBT+ community faces many challenges related to social acceptance, rights and daily life. In the social and political context, Poland is known for its intense debates on LGBT+ rights and anti-discrimination.

Poland has witnessed an increase in tensions over LGBT+ rights in recent years, reflected in political, media and social disputes. Some regions of the country have declared themselves LGBT+ ideology-free zones, which has been met with international criticism and support for those affected. At the same time, regular equality marches and events promoting LGBT+ rights are held in major cities such as Warsaw, Krakow and Wrocław.

The rights of LGBT+ people in Poland still remain limited compared to other Western European countries. Topics such as the possibility for same-sex couples to marry or the right to adoption by LGBT+ people are still controversial and strongly emotive in Poland. On the other hand, there are NGOs and support groups working to improve the situation of LGBT+ people and promote equality.

### **Discussion:**

(duration 20 minutes)

Purpose of the discussion

The aim of the discussion is to understand the current situation of LGBT+ people in Poland, to identify the challenges faced by the LGBT+ community and to find ways in which schools can support LGBT+ students in the context of Polish society.

Proceedings of the discussion

Introduction:

The presenter gives a brief overview of the situation of LGBT+ people in Poland, highlighting key aspects such as rights, social and political challenges, and current initiatives supporting equality.

Topic presentation:

Discuss the main challenges, such as the lack of legal recognition of same-sex relationships, discrimination in the workplace and education, and social tensions around LGBT+ issues.

Analysis of examples of local and international activities supporting the LGBT+ community.

Division into groups:

Participants are divided into small groups that will discuss specific topics related to LGBT+ in Poland. Each group is given different issues to discuss.

Group discussion:



Groups discuss assigned topics such as the impact of local policies on the LGBT+ community, the role of education in promoting equality, support in workplaces and schools, and possible initiatives to support local LGBT+ communities.

#### Presentation of results:

Each group presents its conclusions and ideas on the issues discussed. Participants share their thoughts on the challenges and support opportunities for the LGBT+ community in the Polish context.

#### Summary and conclusions:

The facilitator summarises the discussion, highlighting key findings and proposals. It also includes information on possible actions schools can take to support LGBT+ students in line with the local context.

#### Discussion topics

- The impact of local politics on the LGBT+ community:
- How do local policies affect the daily lives of LGBT+ people in Poland?
- Education versus LGBT+ acceptance:
- How can schools better educate students about LGBT+ and promote acceptance?
- Support for LGBT+ students in Polish schools:
- What are current practices and what changes are needed to better support LGBT+ students?
- The role of NGOs in Poland:
- What activities do NGOs undertake for the LGBT+ community and how can they be supported?
- Safety and support in the school environment:
- What are the most important steps to create a safe and supportive environment for LGBT+ students in schools?



## 20. LGBT and human rights

In the context of human rights, the LGBT+ community is a key area of discussion and action for equality and justice. Human rights, as defined by international norms and conventions, include the rights to equal treatment, dignity, freedom and protection from discrimination. LGBT+ people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or other may experience unique challenges related to their sexual identity and orientation.

In many countries around the world, including Poland, the rights of LGBT+ people are limited or not fully protected, leading to unequal treatment and discrimination. Examples include the lack of legal recognition of same-sex relationships, restrictions on access to transgender-specific health care, and lack of protection from violence and harassment in the workplace or education. International human rights standards, such as the Declaration of Human Rights or the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, provide the foundations for the struggle for equal rights for all, including LGBT+ people.

In practice, this means that everyone should have the right to live free from discrimination, violence, and harassment, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Supporting the rights of LGBT+ people also means promoting their right to participate fully in social, political and economic life, which is key to ensuring justice and equality in modern society. Equal rights and protection for LGBT+ people are fundamental in building a society where everyone has equal opportunities and is treated with respect and dignity.

## 21. Equality education in practice

Equality education in practice is a pedagogical approach that aims to provide all students with equal opportunities to learn and develop, regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, religion, social status or any other differentiating characteristic. In practice, this means creating and implementing strategies that aim to eliminate barriers that can lead to inequality and discrimination in the educational environment.

Equality education involves introducing content into the curriculum that promotes diversity and understanding, and organising activities that teach empathy, respect and tolerance. In practice, it can include activities such as integrating cultural, gender and sexual diversity topics into the curriculum, creating anti-discrimination policies in schools, and training teachers to deal with the diverse needs of students.

In addition, equality education is about creating a school environment where all pupils feel safe and are supported to develop their full potential. It also includes adapting teaching methods to the individual needs of pupils and ensuring that all pupils have equal access to resources and support.

Equality education also involves the promotion of positive attitudes and actions towards inclusion and acceptance of diversity, which contributes to building a school community based on mutual respect and understanding. The implementation of such practices requires the involvement of the entire school community, including teachers, students, parents and administration, and the continuous evaluation and adaptation of activities to respond effectively to changing diversity needs and challenges.

### **Workshop exercise: "Equality in action - Inclusive design".**

(duration 20 minutes)

**Aim:** To develop skills in developing and implementing activities that promote equality and inclusion in school settings, and to learn how to develop educational policies and programmes that support diversity. To develop skills in planning and implementing activities that promote equality. Increased awareness of the needs of students from diverse groups. Practical skills to develop policies and educational programmes that support diversity. Encouraging collaboration and creative thinking on inclusion and equality in school.

## Exercise description:

### Introduction:

The presenter introduces participants to the topic of equality in education, emphasising the importance of creating an environment that supports diversity and inclusion. He explains how practical actions in school can support equality and the importance of implementing policies that eliminate discrimination.

### Divide into groups and task:

Participants are divided into groups. Each group is given a large sheet of paper and markers. Their task is to create a project plan (in the form of a brainstorm, graph or other) that promotes equality and inclusion at school. The projects can cover different aspects (Annex 8)

### Project creation:

Each group develops a detailed plan for their project, which should include:

- Project description
- Project objectives
- Implementation methods
- Anticipated difficulties and how to solve them
- What materials will be needed
- What benefits the project will bring to students and the school community

### Presentation of projects:

Once the group work is completed, representatives from each group present their projects to the other participants. Presentations should be concise and cover the key elements of the project.

### Discussion and feedback:

After the presentations, the facilitator organises a discussion on the projects presented. Participants share their opinions, suggestions and questions. The facilitator draws attention to the projects' strengths and areas for improvement.

### Summary and conclusion:

The facilitator summarises the exercise, emphasising the importance of inclusion and equality at school and how key it is to implement the ideas from the exercise in school reality. He encourages participants to further develop and implement the ideas in their schools.



## Completion

The topic of acquiring the skills to provide effective support to LGBT people in school, both on an individual basis and in the classroom, is a very broad topic in which further training is needed all the time. We realised how crucial it is not only to gain knowledge about LGBT+ identities, but also to acquire skills that will enable you to effectively support students in your daily work. Our discussions and exercises demonstrated the importance of skilfully answering questions, resolving conflicts and creating a space where every student feels accepted and understood. I would like to emphasise that working to support LGBTQ+ students is an ongoing process that requires constant learning and reflection. As our skills and knowledge develop, we will be better able to respond to the changing needs of students and more effectively create an environment where diversity is respected and valued. Please continue to develop your skills, use the resources available and don't be afraid to reach out for support when needed. Your role as teachers is crucial to building a school community where all students can thrive and feel safe.

### **Workshop exercise: "What am I leaving with today?"**

#### Objective:

The exercise is designed to summarise the knowledge and skills gained during the workshop and to allow participants to reflect on what they take away most valuable from today's meeting. This allows participants to better understand how they will apply the new skills to their work and what actions they will take in the future.

The facilitator explains the purpose of the exercise, which is to reflect on the most important lessons and skills learned from the workshop. He encourages participants to reflect honestly on what aspects of the training were most valuable to them and how they can apply them in their practice.

The trainer asks participants to reflect on what was most memorable about the workshop. What they liked and what could be improved.

The facilitator asks each person to share their thoughts.

The facilitator summarises the most frequent themes and conclusions. He/she can group similar contributions and draw attention to the most important aspects that were discussed together.

It encourages participants to discuss how they can put their new skills and knowledge into practice and what challenges they may encounter. The presenter will thank the participants for their contribution and commitment. He emphasises that the learning and development process is continuous, and encourages them to continue to find ways to improve their skills in supporting students and creating an inclusive school environment.

The exercise "What am I leaving with today?" is not only intended to summarise the workshop, but also to inspire further action and reflection on the implementation of the knowledge gained in everyday work.

Evaluation questionnaire Appendix 9.



**Aim:** Before the workshop, we want to know your knowledge, expectations and needs regarding LGBT+ topics in school. We ask for honest answers to help us tailor the training to your needs.

**1. How would you rate your knowledge of LGBT+ issues?**

- ☐ Very low
- ☐ Low
- ☐ Average
- ☐ High
- ☐ Very high

**2. What experiences have you had working with LGBT+ students?**

- ☐ Lack of experience
- ☐ Little experience
- ☐ Moderate experience
- ☐ Extensive experience
- ☐ Very extensive experience

**3. Do you feel confident in talking to students about the diversity of gender identities and sexual orientations?**

- ☐ Definitely not
- ☐ Rather not
- ☐ I have no opinion
- ☐ Rather yes
- ☐ Definitely yes

**4. What are your main concerns about working with LGBT+ students?**

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**5. Do you know how to respond to homophobic behaviour in the classroom?**

- ☐ Definitely not
- ☐ Rather not
- ☐ I have no opinion
- ☐ Rather yes
- ☐ Definitely yes

**6. How would you rate your skills in resolving conflicts related to discrimination based on sexual orientation?**

- ☐ Very weak
- ☐ Weak
- ☐ Medium
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Very good

**7. Do you have experience of talking to parents of students about the 'otherness' of their students?**

- ☐ Lack of experience
- ☐ Little experience
- ☐ Moderate experience
- ☐ Extensive experience
- ☐ Very extensive experience

**8. What are your expectations of the workshop?**

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**9. Do you know where to refer parents of LGBT+ students for support?**

- ☐ Definitely not
- ☐ Rather not
- ☐ I have no opinion
- ☐ Rather yes
- ☐ Definitely yes

**10. How would you rate the atmosphere at your school in terms of acceptance of diversity?**

- ☐ Very negative
- ☐ Rather negative
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Rather positive
- ☐ Very positive



**11. Do you think LGBT+ topics should be covered in the curriculum?**

- Definitely not
- Rather not
- I have no opinion
- Rather yes
- Definitely yes

**12. Do you need support in creating a safe space in the classroom for LGBT+ students?**

- Definitely not
- Rather not
- I have no opinion
- Rather yes
- Definitely yes

**13. Are you knowledgeable about human rights in the LGBT+ context?**

- Very low
- Low
- Average
- High
- Very high

**14. Have you ever attended training on LGBT+ issues?**

- Yes
- Not

**15. Can you identify mythologies and facts about the LGBT+ community?**

- Definitely not
- Rather not
- I have no opinion
- Rather yes
- Definitely yes

**16. Are you open to learning more about equality education?**

- Definitely not
- Rather not
- I have no opinion
- Rather yes
- Definitely yes



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**17. How would you rate your skills in peer mediation of LGBT+ conflicts?**

- Very weak
- Weak
- Medium
- Good
- Very good

**18. Are you familiar with mediation techniques and methods?**

- Definitely not
- Rather not
- I have no opinion
- Rather yes
- Definitely yes

**19. Have you ever encountered negative reactions from parents in terms of supporting LGBT+ students?**

- Yes
- Not

**20. Do you feel ready to support LGBT+ students in your school?**

- Definitely not
- Rather not
- I have no opinion
- Rather yes
- Definitely yes

Annex 2.



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### **Scene 1: Mocking in the Canteen**

Description: A group of students make fun of and ridicule one of their classmates who identifies as gay. They use offensive epithets and make fun of his sexual orientation loudly in the school canteen. Other students witness the situation, but no one reacts.

Task for groups: What steps should be taken? What steps can be taken to ensure safety and support for a student who has been a victim? How can we educate about respect and acceptance?

### **Scene 2: Discrimination in Physical Education**

Description: During a physical education lesson, a teacher notices that one pupil, who is bisexual, is deliberately overlooked when picking teams to play football. Other pupils express their displeasure, saying that they do not want to play with "such a person".

Task for groups: What should the teacher do to remedy the situation? What should other pupils do? What strategies can help to ensure that all pupils feel equally treated and respected? What actions can be taken to prevent such situations in the future?

### **Scene 3: Exchange of Stereotypical Comments in the Classroom**

Description: In a parenting lesson, students discuss topics related to family and relationships. One pupil expresses his negative opinions about same-sex families, saying that such families are 'abnormal' and 'bad'. The rest of the class remains silent or nods in agreement.

Task for groups: How should such comments be responded to in lessons? What methods can be used to effectively educate students about family diversity and counteract stereotypes?

### **Scene 4: Refusal of Elective Activities**

Description: A student who identifies as non-binary and speaks openly about it applies to take extra art classes, but her application is rejected because of her gender identity. Other students and teachers are reluctant, and the reasons for rejection are unclear and unjustified.

Task for groups: What actions should the teacher and other students take to clarify the situation, support the colleague and ensure that students are treated fairly? What steps can be taken to prevent discrimination in access to extra-curricular activities?

### **Scene 5: Inappropriate remarks on the Internet**

Description: A student who is open about his sexual orientation on social media begins to receive offensive comments from other students. The comments are full of heckling and name-calling and the student feels threatened and overwhelmed.

Task for groups: How can teachers support a student in the face of cyberbullying? How should peers support a colleague? What steps can be taken to keep a student safe online and help them cope with online violence





1. Why do some people have two mothers or two fathers?
2. What does it mean to be gay or lesbian?
3. Is being LGBT+ a bad thing?
4. Why do some people change gender?
5. Can LGBT+ people fall in love in the same way as other people?
6. What is coming out?
7. Is it possible to be both a boy and a girl at the same time?
8. Why do some people dislike LGBT+ people?
9. How can I help a colleague if they are LGBT+?
10. Can sexual orientation change?
11. What does it mean to be a transgender person?
12. What are the differences between homosexuals, bisexuals and heterosexuals?
13. Why does school teach us about LGBT+?
14. What is homophobia?
15. Is being LGBT+ a choice?
16. How can I support a friend who is LGBT+?
17. Are all LGBT+ people the same?
18. Does religion say anything about LGBT+?
19. Can you recognise that someone is LGBT+ by their appearance?
20. Why do some countries prohibit being LGBT+?

In class, during recess, several students start talking about the latest episode of a popular TV series. During the conversation, one of the students, Michal, mentions that there is a character in the series who is gay. At this, several other students, including Karol, start making fun of this character, using derogatory terms. When Michal tries to interrupt them, saying that there is nothing wrong with being gay, Karol starts mocking him and insinuating that Michal is gay too. Karol is joined by several more people who start repeating the malicious comments and ask if Michal "likes boys too". Michal tries to ignore the comments, but it is clear that he is clearly disturbed and hurt. The rest of the class watches the situation, unsure how to react.

In this situation, it is important for students who witness this behaviour to think about what they can do to stop the bullying and support Michael. It is this situation that would form the basis of a workshop exercise in which students can discuss and plan how they might respond in such a case to support their colleague and counter homophobia.

1. Why does someone choose to be LGBT?
2. Is it normal for someone to have two dads or two mums?
3. Is it possible to change one's sexual orientation?
4. What does it mean to be transgender?
5. Why are some people not accepting of LGBT people?
6. Is being LGBT+ a sin?
7. Can LGBT+ people have students?
8. Why do some boys like to dress like girls?
9. Are there LGBT+ people in our class?
10. What are the differences between being gay and lesbian



## Topics for simulated conversation:

1. A parent is concerned when she finds out that her child has two dads. The teacher explains that different families are equally valuable and that the child needs support at school to feel accepted.
2. Parent expresses concern that their child, who is transgender, may be at risk of peer violence. The teacher reassures the parent about the school's anti-discrimination policy and suggests joint solutions, such as training for students.
3. A parent is concerned that their child's sexual orientation may affect their academic and social future. The teacher emphasises that the school is a place that supports all students, regardless of their orientation or gender identity.
4. The parent does not understand the concept of 'genderqueer' and expresses his/her doubts about how to discuss such issues with the child. The teacher provides clear definitions and examples, and offers educational materials that can help with understanding.
5. A parent is concerned that their child may be excluded from their peer group because of their gender identity. The teacher discusses ways to create a safe space in the classroom and provides support for the student's social integration.
6. A parent is surprised to learn that their child identifies as a lesbian. The teacher talks about the values of diversity and acceptance, and offers emotional support to the child and family.
7. Parent expresses concern about the impact of peer jokes and comments on their child's wellbeing. Teacher discusses anti-discrimination programmes at school and encourages them to work together to develop strategies to deal with such situations.
8. A parent asks why their child, who identifies as bisexual, often changes partners. The teacher explains that sexual orientation does not define romantic behaviour and emphasises that emotional support and a safe environment are important.
9. Parent expresses concern that being LGBT+ may affect their child's mental health. Teacher discusses the importance of emotional support and available resources such as school counselling and support groups.
10. The parent is sceptical about the school's actions to promote equality and diversity, seeing them as unnecessary. Teacher explains how equality education supports all pupils and the benefits of creating a more inclusive school environment.

### Prominent LGBT+ people:

1. The group explores the lives and achievements of well-known LGBT+ individuals who have had a significant impact on society, culture or science. These can range from historical figures to contemporary personalities. The group prepares a presentation on one or more such individuals, highlighting their contribution to the struggle for equality and acceptance and their impact on contemporary culture.

### Stories of acceptance:

2. The group creates a narrative or skit based on real or fictional stories that illustrate the process of acceptance of LGBT+ people by families, friends or communities. The aim is to show how different individuals and groups have dealt with the challenges of acceptance and how they have managed to make positive changes in their environment.

### Examples of equality measures:

3. The group explores various initiatives and organisations that work for equality and the rights of LGBT+ people. These can be social campaigns, educational actions, foundations or government programmes. The group prepares material showing what actions are being taken to promote equality and how each of us can contribute to supporting these actions.

### Anti-discrimination:

4. The group is developing a set of practical actions and strategies that can be used in school to tackle discrimination against LGBT+ people. These can be policies, procedures or initiatives that promote equality and respect in the school environment. The presentation may also include examples of successful actions that have been implemented in other schools.

### The role of education in promoting equality:

5. The group is looking at how education can contribute to promoting equality and acceptance of LGBT+ people. They can explore different teaching methods and educational materials that can be used to teach about diversity and human rights. The group creates a lesson plan or educational project that can be used in school.

### Stereotypes and prejudices:

6. The group is exploring what stereotypes and prejudices may exist towards LGBT+ people and how they can be overcome. They are preparing a presentation that shows how stereotypes affect perceptions of LGBT+ people and what actions can help to eliminate them.

The influence of the media on LGBT+ perceptions:

7. The group looks at how the media portrays LGBT+ people and the implications for society. They can research different media sources such as television, films, the internet or the press and present their findings, discussing the impact of positive and negative portrayals.

Examples of peer support:

8. The group develops examples of how peers can support their LGBT+ peers. They can create training materials or a peer campaign that shows how to offer support, understanding and friendship.

How to create an inclusive school environment:

9. The group explores what elements should be present in a school to create an inclusive and supportive environment for LGBT+ students. They may discuss school policies, community initiatives and efforts to build a culture of acceptance.

Human rights education:

10. The group is preparing a project on human rights in the context of LGBT+ people. They can focus on international and national legal standards that protect LGBT+ people and discuss how these rights can be implemented and supported in a school setting.



1. Creation of a diversity club: Organise regular meetings for students to discuss topics related to cultural diversity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other social issues. The club can also invite guest speakers, conduct workshops and organise events.
2. Introduce equality and diversity themes into the curriculum: Develop and implement lessons that integrate equality and diversity themes into the existing curriculum. Topics could include human rights history, historical figures from different social groups, or diverse literature.
3. Equality awareness campaign: Create an information campaign to be carried out in school, including posters, leaflets, multimedia presentations and exhibitions to raise awareness of equality and the fight against discrimination.
4. Mentoring and support programme for students from marginalised groups: Develop a programme where senior students or teachers act as mentors and advisors to students from marginalised groups, including LGBT+ students, offering emotional and practical support.
5. Organisation of thematic days or diversity weeks: Introduce cyclical thematic days or weeks in the school, during which a variety of activities, workshops, and talks on different aspects of diversity and equality will be organised.
6. Introduce an anti-discrimination policy: Develop and implement an anti-discrimination policy in the school that clearly defines the principles of equal treatment, procedures for reporting discriminatory incidents and how to resolve them.
7. Diversity training programme for teachers: Organise regular training and workshops for teachers to help them better understand the needs of students from diverse backgrounds and develop skills to effectively teach and support LGBT+ students.
8. Creating a space for conversations about identity and diversity: Create a safe space in the school where students can anonymously share their experiences and concerns about their gender identity, sexual orientation or other aspects of their identity.

**Purpose:** Please complete the questionnaire again after the training to check that the training objectives have been met and that your knowledge and skills have improved.

**1. How do you assess your LGBT+ knowledge after the training?**

- ☐ Very low
- ☐ Low
- ☐ Average
- ☐ High
- ☐ Very high

**2. What experiences do you have now working with LGBT+ students?**

- ☐ Lack of experience
- ☐ Little experience
- ☐ Moderate experience
- ☐ Extensive experience
- ☐ Very extensive experience

**3. After the training, do you feel confident in talking to students about the diversity of gender identities and sexual orientations?**

- ☐ Definitely not
- ☐ Rather not
- ☐ I have no opinion
- ☐ Rather yes
- ☐ Definitely yes

**4. Have your concerns about working with LGBT+ students diminished?**  
(Open answer)

**5. Do you now know how to respond to homophobic behaviour in the classroom?**

- ☐ Definitely not
- ☐ Rather not
- ☐ I have no opinion
- ☐ Rather yes
- ☐ Definitely yes

6. **How do you assess your skills in resolving conflicts related to sexual orientation discrimination after the training?**
- ☐ Very weak
  - ☐ Weak
  - ☐ Medium
  - ☐ Good
  - ☐ Very good
7. **Do you now feel more confident in talking to students' parents about 'otherness'?**
- ☐ Definitely not
  - ☐ Rather not
  - ☐ I have no opinion
  - ☐ Rather yes
  - ☐ Definitely yes
8. **Have your expectations of the workshop been met?**
- .....
- .....
- .....
9. **Do you now know where to refer parents of LGBT+ students for support?**
- ☐ Definitely not
  - ☐ Rather not
  - ☐ I have no opinion
  - ☐ Rather yes
  - ☐ Definitely yes
10. **How would you rate the atmosphere in your school in terms of diversity acceptance after the workshop?**
- ☐ Very negative
  - ☐ Rather negative
  - ☐ Neutral
  - ☐ Rather positive
  - ☐ Very positive
11. **After the training, do you think LGBT+ topics should be covered in the curriculum?**
- ☐ Definitely not
  - ☐ Rather not
  - ☐ I have no opinion
  - ☐ Rather yes
  - ☐ Definitely yes



**12. Do you now feel more prepared to create a safe space in the classroom for LGBT+ students?**

- Definitely not
- Rather not
- I have no opinion
- Rather yes
- Definitely yes

**13. Has your knowledge of human rights in the LGBT+ context increased after the training?**

- Definitely not
- Rather not
- I have no opinion
- Rather yes
- Definitely yes

**14. Was this training your first LGBT+ training?**

- Yes
- Not

**15. Can you now better identify the mythologies and facts about the LGBT+ community?**

- Definitely not
- Rather not
- I have no opinion
- Rather yes
- Definitely yes

**16. Do you now feel more open to learning more about equality education?**

- Definitely not
- Rather not
- I have no opinion
- Rather yes
- Definitely yes

**17. How do you assess your skills in peer mediation of LGBT+ conflicts after the training?**

- Very weak
- Weak
- Medium
- Good
- Very good

**18. Did your knowledge of mediation techniques and methods increase after the training?**

- Definitely not
- Rather not
- I have no opinion
- Rather yes
- Definitely yes

**19. After the training, do you feel better equipped to deal with negative parental reactions in the context of supporting LGBT+ students?**

- Yes
- Not

**20. Do you now feel ready to support LGBT+ students in your school after the training?**

- Definitely not
- Rather not
- I have no opinion
- Rather yes
- Definitely yes

Both questionnaires will allow for an effective evaluation, making it possible to compare pre- and post-training results and to determine to what extent participants have improved their knowledge and skills.