



GENDERQUEER UNIVERSITY: QUESTIONING NORMS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Report of the study session held by

**ANSO - Association of Nordic and Pol-Balt LGBTQ Student Organizations
in co-operation with the European Youth Centre of the Council of Europe**

European Youth Centre Strasbourg

14th – 21st March 2010



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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Acknowledgements

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Dear participants, members of ANSO and colleagues,

The study session “GenderQueer University: Questioning Norms in Higher Education” was one of the key activities for ANSO in 2010. The session proved to be an important platform for cooperation and development in the struggle to fight heteronormativity in higher education. Young LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer) activists and student activists gathered for a week of scrutiny of norms and structures, both in their respective countries’ higher education but also in their own work in LGBTQ organizations and in student unions.

The experiences that were shared during the session by participants proved a clear need for focus on heteronormativity, in higher education and in organizations directed at young people and students, as it makes certain groups invisible and leads to discrimination in all forms. The evaluation of the study session and reports from participants after the event has shown the positive effects focus on heteronormativity, gender and norm criticism can result in, especially in a context of non-formal education.

“GenderQueer University: Questioning Norms in Higher Education” proved to the organisers the importance of continued awareness of the heteronorm among students and staff in higher education, and the invisibility, discrimination and lesbo-, homo-, bi-, trans and queerphobia that it still results in. But more importantly, it emphasized the immense dedication and willingness among young activists to create change on a personal and organisational level, and even on a societal and structural level. This dedication should prove to be a force of inspiration for many activists to come, in ANSO and beyond.

Further reading of this report will in the first section further outline the background of the study session and of the participants. The second section details the program aims and objectives, and will hopefully be of use to ANSO and participants when trying to disseminate and further develop the themes from the session. Part 3 describes new ideas that emerged during the study session. Part 4 analyses the outcomes for all parties involved in the study session, based

on evaluation and work done after the study session. Finally, part 5 and 6 outlines follow-up activities and conclusions to be drawn from the project.

In my capacity as the president of ANSO, and as part of the preparatory team behind the study session, I would like to thank everyone who made the event reality; the team, the educational advisor, the participants, the Directorate of Youth and the staff at the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg.

Micah Grzywnowicz, President of ANSO and the Course Director

1. MAIN OUTCOMES OF THE STUDY SESSION

This section outlines the outcomes from the study session. These are outcomes based on evaluation by team and participants, and the recommendations and ideas emerging from this are directed at participants, at ANSO, at other LGBTQ and student organizations, towards Council of Europe and towards others in the area of European youth work.

1.1 Recommendations for European youth work

Within European youth work NGOs and other actors in the field are quite skilled when it comes to anti-discrimination work, equal opportunities and human rights. This means that they often have tools to counteract different forms of discrimination. However, in this work sexuality and gender identity and expression are often forgotten. The reasons for it might be:

- Cultural and/or religious biases against non-heterosexual people and transgender people.
- The sensitive nature of LGBTQ issues. Many believe by that applying gender-neutral wording, or by mentioning homosexuality and bisexuality they might offend other groups.
- “LGBTQ-issues does not concern our group” approach as a way of marginalizing LGBTQ issues.

Culture and religion are often mentioned as reasons for leaving out LGBTQ issues from the discussion. Those who work with LGBTQ issues are not asking anyone to relinquish or compromise their religious beliefs. However, prejudice is usually based on lack of knowledge and this can never change, unless we make the effort to familiarise each other with diversity. Common respect can only occur with information and mutual willingness to understand each other and change old patterns, and this change does not happen on its own. If those who work with youth can promote an inclusive approach, there is a chance we can actually fight discrimination instead of contributing by silence.

A common way of thinking is that homosexuality, bisexuality, and transgender identity are something that only concerns those “other” people. Therefore, it is common to address young people in a way that assumes they all identify as heterosexual or are cisgender¹. Gender identity and sexual orientation are not something that can be seen on the outside. When interacting with young people, sexual orientation should not be assumed, neither when it comes to homosexuality nor heterosexuality. Similarly, gender identity should not be assumed. In practical terms this translates to:

- Using gender neutral pronouns (zie/hir)
- Using neutral wording (partner, parent)
- Avoid saying “ladies and gentlemen”, or using gender-based groups unless it has a specific purpose in that exercise.
- Deal with and openly address homophobic, biphobic or transphobic statements in the group.

If youth workers realise their ability to reinforce norms and stereotypes and actively work against such reinforcement, and by promoting these simple measures in European youth work, inclusion and respect are in reach. If these steps then become intrinsic in NGOs and other youth groups, it will in turn ensure less heteronormative mindsets among youth.

What is then forgotten is that by neglecting to mention LGBTQ in positive terms, we are marginalising and discriminating a group of people who are constantly being pushed into the box of deviants. However, the most important implication of this failure to mention homosexuality, bisexuality and transgender persons in positive terms is a constant reproduction of what is believed to be normal. It leads to narrow understandings of what it can mean to be a man, and what it can mean to be a woman. Accordingly, those who do not succeed in being *the right* type of man are then punished for their failure to reproduce the correct image of masculinity or femininity. This punishment can be social ostracism, discrimination and violence, and this can affect anyone, regardless of sexuality and gender identity.

¹ Cisgender is when the sex assigned at birth corresponds with the self-perceived gender identity and gender expression of the individual.

When it comes to education, heteronormativity as the basis for discrimination of LGBTQ-students is a major problem in all European countries. It influences the quality of education greatly, and does not create an open environment for students, faculty and staff. On the basis of these highly problematic situations, awareness about the normative structures much be created. In the context of European youth work, all parties involved must be provided with the knowledge necessary to prevent LGBTQ youth to become outsiders. This can only be done by breaking down the boxes which assumes a normal and an abnormal.

- Those who work with young people must become aware of their power to reinforce stereotypes and ideas about what is normal and accepted.
- When talking about LGBTQ people one must avoid creating an “us and them”-discourse where LGBTQ people are talked about as something that does not apply to any of the people present, or their family, or friends.

1.2 Suggestions and recommendations for the Council of Europe

LGBTQ issues may be difficult to approach in a European context, both in the European Union and in the Council of Europe based on the different attitudes towards LGBTQ people in the different member states. This does not mean that the discussions and fights can be avoided. As it’s been said so many times: human rights are LGBTQ rights and cannot be silenced. A way of raising the awareness about this fact and of creating Europe of equal opportunities and universal respect is through fighting heteronormativity.

Fighting heteronormativity in higher education also means raising the quality, which is something all Council of Europe’s member states would benefit from. More accessible and less normative institutions will attract more students. It will also have students who thrive and enjoy their education, which leads to less absence due to physical and mental illness and fewer students dropping out. It also leads to higher quality of the research done, higher grades levels and consequently more prestige for the institutions.

Concrete measures that should be taken by the Council of Europe:

- Address LGBT issues when talking about human rights

- When working with gender, avoid a strictly binary understanding of gender, openly including transgender issues in it
- Keep in mind that a non-heteronormative education and trainings are an education of higher quality.

1.3 Main results for the organisers of the study session

Empowerment of young people must be seen as the most important outcome of the study session. The chance to develop as activists, and then make new connections and cooperation are highly useful on a personal level. If young people have the chance to feel they are extending their knowledge, and then turn this into tangible tools, it will help them take the positions of change-makers and stake holders that young people rightfully should have. The personal development is also very important for the development of ANSO. By having strong, competent individuals associated with ANSO, the organization can grow stronger, consequently holding a recognized position in the field of LGBTQ work and higher education.

Creating new alliances

One of the most important outcomes for ANSO is the extension of its contact network. By being able to invite participants from outside our member organizations in the Nordic countries, Poland and the Baltic states, ANSO was able to make personal contacts, as well as create connections with LGBTQ organizations and student unions in the Council of Europe member states, as well as in the United States of America. These contacts are in turn used for personal and organizational growth in ANSO. It has also provided opportunities for ANSO participation in other events.

The results for the team

The team consisted of 5 young people from different European countries, of many different gender identities, of different age and many other factors that

allowed them to inspire and challenge each other. They all were a part of ANSO board and were able to convey ANSO's ideals of inclusion, non-discrimination and non-heteronormativity in their work.

The organising team of the conference had different levels of experience when it came to non-formal education as well as organization of large events, but regardless of past experience each member of the team developed immensely as a young person working with youth. After the study session the experiences of organizing events and of holding workshops has been used to improve their work on a personal level, as well as in the organizations they work for in their home countries, and in ANSO.

The results for ANSO as a developing organisation

The study session "GenderQueer University" has built a great capacity within ANSO when it comes to non-formal education. Cooperation with Council of Europe opened up for material that otherwise might not been taken into account. This study session, as well as the previous study sessions has built a level of professionalism within ANSO that we are very proud of. This professionalism has then been transferred to other activists and events within ANSO, as well as in our cooperation with other NGOs.

Establishing ANSO as a stakeholder on LGBTQ-issues

For ANSO the study session is a valuable promotion tool. The event guarantees us publicity in many phases, from the call for participants being distributed among a great number of organisations and activists, to the positive image we hope and believe participants got during the study session, and finally positive reviews and results being given to participating organisations after the return of participants to their organizations and home countries.

This event has also been an important step in manifesting ANSO's position as a stakeholder on LGBTQ issues, heteronormativity, transgender issues and within higher education. This is especially important in our work with student unions.

After the event ANSO representatives has been invited to many other youth events, organized by NGOs, by the Council of Europe and by the European Union. These outcomes are most likely not a direct result of the study session alone, but it must be seen as a step in the process of recognition for ANSO, and for a young organization closing in on its six-year anniversary it is highly motivating.

The connection between the Council of Europe and ANSO should be seen as a stamp of approval for ANSO. The affiliation ensures ANSO a good reputation among other NGOs and activists, and it is also a positive tool when it comes to other funders. Being granted a study session, and being able to complete it successfully is a merit for ANSO that cannot be dismissed easily. The experience of cooperating with the Council of Europe has also resulted in recognition from ANSO of the very positive work that the latter is doing for young people, even on grounds of gender and sexual orientation, which in many cases cannot be taken for granted.

1.4 Main learning points for participants

The learning points for participants were diverse, which is reflected in their evaluation of the programme points and the study session itself. A general impression is that the topics really spoke to them and made them eager to discuss and learn more. For some it was strictly learning on an activist level. For others it became a week of learning and development on a very personal level as well. In the words of one of the participants: "The interaction with other participants taught me about compromise and trust. I also learned to accept myself more, and I learned that I am beautiful, loved and accepted."

Creating tools to recognize normative structures and counteract them

The development of their understanding of heteronormativity and transgender issues enabled the participants to create tools for recognizing heteronormative structures and ultimately counteract them. The discussions connected to the different sessions and the work done by participants in their action groups were part of this development. Here they had a chance to take the learning points and

transform them into tangible material to take back with them after the study session. Its importance is reflected in the amount of work done by the participants both in the designated time slots, but also after the day's programme had ended.

The participants were encouraged to look at their university curriculum, at the way their education is structured and the examples that are given, or not given, by teachers and professors. During the week, examples of heteronormative laws and regulations were given, especially targeting transgender persons. It resulted in a whole workshop devoted to rights of transgender employees. As mentioned, it was also important that the participants look within themselves and see how they themselves reproduce heteronormative structures. Examples of this could be to reinforce a binary understanding of gender; a failure to include transgender people in LGBTQ organisations, or a narrow understanding of sexuality that excludes individuals.

Interconnected forms of discrimination and power structures

Participants got to know an intersectional approach to LGBTQ work, where the many layers of a person's identity should be taken into consideration, even when focusing on gender and sexuality. The intersectional approach was presented and throughout their week of work a shift in their terminology and way of thinking could be noticed. They were gradually starting to think about, for instance, (dis)ability and ethnical background as factors of significance when talking about heteronormativity and improving higher education. One could also see them getting more comfortable talking about gender as more than a binary concept. It also invited participants to share their own experiences of gender and identity, which was a proof of safe space and trust within the group.

Another positive development was the development of their ideas and more self-assured approaches to fighting heteronormativity.

Because of their ability to see gender and sexuality as interconnected with other forms of discrimination and with power structures many of them were able to see their work on LGBTQ issues as part of a larger struggle against hierarchies of power. Even as youth, labelled often as "fewer opportunities", they realised that

they themselves in many respects are in privileged positions. This can be as due to economic situation, skin colour, ability or nationality, among other factors. It was useful for many participants to see that being part of a discriminated group did not mean that they are not in other respects part of a privileged group that is in power positions as a representative of the norm.

Developing as activists

Feedback from participants has illustrated the importance of gathering young activists as part of a continued development in their activism. This analysis is based on the communication with participants after the study session, and on ideas for further development and events that was sprung out after the week in Strasbourg. New concepts and ideas proved useful in their development, and inspired the activists to lobby their institutions of higher education more actively for a less heteronormative education. It also inspired many to make their organisations more inclusive by seeing the individual and the many layers of identity as relevant to work on LGBTQ rights, specifically on transgender issues, and in fighting heteronormativity in general. Concretely this meant that communication strategies should be changed for a more inclusive language; that the T (transgender) in LGBTQ should be included in the organisation's work, not only in name; and that student unions should include LGBTQ and non-heteronormative perspectives in their work. Many of the participants stayed in touch after the study session and took part in each other's activities, exchanges and projects. They also served each other as resource persons, assistance, or friends.

Creating allies and partnerships

As a result of the study session partnerships across borders and across types of organizations, such as LGBTQ organizations and student unions, became much more feasible. In learning by exchanging experience and working together with other activists with different experiences the path opened up for new allies and partnerships. Through seeing the effect of gathering international activists, new partnerships could emerge. Participants mentioned future work with ANSO and

its member organizations as an important part, but also work with European Youth Foundation, EYF, in fighting human rights violations against LGBTQ people was mentioned. Depending on which group they were representing, contacting their student unions and local or national LGBTQ organizations and set up cooperation is mentioned.

The groundwork was also done for future solidarity actions, such as in the instance of the homophobic legislation banning non-negative information about homosexuality and bisexuality in Lithuania, or with banned Pride Marches around Europe. By creating the ties to other activists through a study session, the importance of such solidarity actions became more visible, and the actions more likely to happen.

Participants also emphasized the value of getting to know Council of Europe.

2. INTRODUCTIONS

This chapter will briefly outline:

- background of the study session
- aims and objectives of the study session
- profile of participants
- programme flow and main issues discussed

2.1 Background of the study session

One of the main aims of ANSO, Association of Nordic and Pol-Balt LGBTQ Student Organizations, is fighting heteronormativity in higher education. ANSO believes that higher education is a key factor in changing society but also in reproducing norms. As long as academia does not welcome all students, and ignore the reality of many citizens, prejudice will be reproduced over and over again. The goal of the study session was to provide participants with knowledge about discriminatory structures in seemingly neutral contexts. Developing arguments on why higher education needs to address heteronormativity was essential in order to create strategies to counteract inequalities. ANSO wanted also to address transgender and gender issues in higher education, which are often omitted in LGBTQ activism, yet very important. One of the goals ANSO has is to work on widely understood gender equality, meaning equality between all possible genders, not only traditionally female and male.

2.2 Aims and objectives of the study session

The main aim of the study session was to strengthen LGBTQ and student activists in their work for equality by examining gender and transgender issues and existing norms in higher education. By fighting heteronormativity we believe that we are fighting the very roots of trans- and homophobia and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, and gender expression. A heteronormative higher education has quality problems and passes on stereotypes and prejudices. Examples of how it shows are:

- Students who will become teachers are not equipped to handle trans- and homophobic bullying in their future classes
- Problems with scientific credibility; LGBTQ blind studies reinforce the idea that there are no LGBTQ persons, families or children
- Students and teachers might be discriminated against
- LGBTQ students are made invisible
- Literature might suggest that LGBTQ persons are sick and the teaching staff does not oppose it

Because heteronormativity is the source of unequal rights for LGBTQ persons at universities, this became the natural starting points for developing workshops and discussions during the study session.

The objectives of the study session were the following:

- To explore a notion of gender (gender identities, gender expression, gender fluidity, transgender aspects, (de)construction of gender)
- To explore heteronormativity in higher education (existing norms, consequences and possible solutions)
- To examine access to higher education by gender variant students (inclusion, exclusion, equal treatment of students, literature used, toilets, etc.)
- To explore a notion of queer (creating a common understanding of queer, queer as identity, theory, strategy)
- To introduce queer pedagogy and norm critical approach
- To involve student unions in work on inclusion of gender variant students and work against heteronormativity at universities (examples, strategies, future ideas, cooperation between LGBTQ organisations and student unions, building alliances)
- To create strategies to counteract heteronormativity on personal, organisational, and institutional levels as well as discrimination on grounds of gender, and to create strategies and guidelines to work for gender equality at universities
- To include intersectional approach to LGBTQ student activism
- To enable participants to create new alliances and co-operation (student unions, LGBTQ organisations, other institutions)

In order to be prepared to work towards these aims and objectives, the participants were asked to do some preparation work before the session. This included investigating their local communities by looking at the following:

- Is there an LGBTQ student group/organisation in your university/city?
- What is the stand of your local student union on LGBTQ issues?
- Does your National Union of Students have a policy on LGBTQ issues?
- Does your university have someone responsible for equality?
- If there is a responsible person/group, what kind of equality work is done at the university? Are there for example seminars on equality between men and women, action plans against ethnic harassments or other?
- Does your university teach gender studies? Does it include queer studies?

The questions were sent out in one of the three information letters received by the participants before arriving in Strasbourg. It enabled participants to tie the discussions to their national and local situations, thus making the results more tangible and applicable to their own realities. Moreover, the participants were sent background texts and information in order to prepare for the session. The texts can be found in the Appendix at the end of this report.

2.3 Profile of participants

The participants of the study session were chosen from the following groups based on their submitted applications:

- 1) European LGBTQ student activists or LGBTQ activists interested in student issues
- 2) European Student Union activists, equality officers, or similar.

During a careful selection process, the team tried to ensure balance between the two groups, while also giving priority to those participants with the highest level of motivation to take part in the activity, and those who expressed a greater level of interest in contributing actively to the achievements of the objectives of

the study session. One of the most important criteria was also the participants' ability and motivation to act as multipliers.

No prior experience in working with the concepts of queer, transgender and heteronormativity or experience with student politics was required, but everyone had to demonstrate an interest in the subjects, and be willing to share their own knowledge and create new alliances and partnerships. The goal was to try to cater to different levels of experiences and knowledge, while expecting participants to contribute with experience of student politics or within LGBTQ organisations to combine the backgrounds and inputs for a high level of learning and creativity.

Other requirements were that participants had to be able to work and communicate in English; reside in the Council of Europe member states; and be aged between 18 and 30. Priority was given to participants who would be able to act as multipliers within their local student union or LGBTQ (student) organisation, thereby bringing the results of the session to a wider audience and implementing them with as many young activists as possible.

The 39 participants (including the team) came from 23 countries, including two countries outside of the Council of Europe member states, the United States of America and Kyrgyzstan. The average age of the group was 25.

2.4 Programme flow and main issues discussed

The programme was composed so that it would progress smoothly from one point to the other, building upon participants' experiences and also taking into account their expectations and needs. The main segments of the program were:

- Official opening
- Presentations of participants, ANSO, the Council of Europe, and programme of the study session
- Establishing ground rules
- Sharing realities, identifying the challenges
- Organisations' fair
- Home groups

- Introduction to terminology
- The concept of identity
- Introduction to intersectionality, norms, and heterosexual matrix
- Concepts of gender and transgender
- Consequences of heteronormativity
- Introduction to anti-oppressive pedagogy
- Local realities
- Introduction to the Issue Paper of the Commissioner for Human Rights²
- Simulation
- Networking and partnerships
- Team building
- Evaluation

The program was mainly designed to address the theoretical background for which the participants would be basing their work throughout the week, generally group work, as well as in the so-called action groups. By providing participants with inputs on heteronormativity, intersectionality and norm critical perspectives, they were able to apply new strategies and ideas in both their group work and their preparations for implementing such results in their own organisations.

Evening programme

- Sunday: Welcome evening
- Monday: International cultural evening
- Tuesday: Movie Evening
- Wednesday: Performance by Josephine Wilson
- Thursday: Free afternoon - Evening in town – exploring the LGBT scene in Strasbourg
- Friday: Queer stories reading with contributions from participants
- Saturday: Farewell party

² The document published by the Commissioner provides an important insight of how the policies regarding gender identity are developing within the Council of Europe. Moreover, this publication has been the first of this kind on the European level, which is crucial sign that gender identity issues started to enter mainstream human rights discourse.

The evening programme was seen as an integral part of the study session as it promoted group cohesion through games and activities. The alcohol-free game night and queer stories reading night were especially successful in this respect. Although an optional part of the programme, most participants took part and it became an extension of team building activities in the daily, obligatory programme. The participants themselves were in charge of the evening programme and seemed more than happy for the opportunity to arrange for activities where they could get to know each other and build closer connections. International evening and international coffee breaks turned out to be great ice-breakers. Participants had brought snacks and beverages, dances, music and similar from their countries or regions, which in a very basic and simple way opened up to other cultures and customs, and for sharing on a more personal level.

Other evening events included parties and movie screenings of LGBTQ films and short films brought by the participants. When planning the programme, it was important to avoid that the evening events were focused on alcohol. This resulted in alcohol-free evenings, a minimum of promotion of alcohol and access alcohol-free options as a measure to avoid people feeling excluded from the group due to drinking pressure. In general, the team had an outspoken approach of inclusion of all. This meant not using exercises that excluded people based on physical (dis)ability, using inclusive language and other similar measures, all in hopes of creating a safe and inclusive space for all participants.

2.5 Methodology

When planning the entire study session the team wanted to ensure a high level of involvement from the participants in belief that this would lead to a better learning process. This should be seen as part of ANSO's and Council of Europe's ideal of non-formal education. This meant that any theoretical input was combined with group discussions, exercises and other creative approaches. In the case of heteronormativity, the concept was first explained and visualized by examples in order to create a common understanding. Then participants got questions, which helped them reflect on, and analyse their own meetings with heteronormativity, and their own reproduction of normative structures.

The so-called action groups were also examples of how participants got the chance to structure their own work and spend their time on topics of their own interest. This resulted in interesting and useful outcomes, created by, and for, participants themselves. For more concrete examples of how interaction and active participation was accomplished, please refer to *2.2 Inputs of team members and external experts* as well as *4.3 Main learning points for participants*.

Team building activities, energizers and similar activities should also be seen as part of the methodology. One part of the programme should not be seen separate from the next. The first would pave way for the next, and somewhere in this a common understanding, mutual respect and critical eyes on the topics could find its place. By helping participants get to know each other, getting comfortable together and finding common ways of communicating safe spaces could emerge. The sense of a safe space in turn allowed for questions and feelings that might otherwise feel difficult to address. It might also lead to more personal development and a critical perspective one's own understandings of sexuality, gender and norms. These reflections were encouraged during sessions, but also during "home groups", a gathering at the end of each day where a fixed group of people gathered to share feelings from the day, once again in the hope of creating safe spaces for communication and feedback, which also turned out to be the case for a majority of participants.

3. PROGRAMME – INPUTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section outlines the programme flow and provides concrete examples of how the goals and aims of the study session were accomplished.

3.1 Outline of the content of the discussions

As the title of the study session was “GenderQueer University: Questioning Norms in Higher Education” the discussions naturally revolved around heteronormativity, transgender issues, and gender norms in general while making the connections to higher education. In addition, an intersectional approach to anti-discrimination work was highlighted.

Discussions were largely based on the inputs given by the team members and external experts. However, this was the mere basis. Participants’ own experiences and reflections gave the discussions significance. Through dialogue and exchange the young activists could create a better understanding of heteronormativity and get the tools to counteract it in their organisations, in their universities and in their daily lives.

The main topics discussed during “GenderQueer University: Questioning Norms in Higher Education” were:

- Heteronormativity
- Higher Education
- Intersectionality
- Transgender
- Networking and Partnerships
- Accessibility

3.2 Inputs of team members and external experts

Day One

The first day's role was to provide the participants with an introduction to the session, topic, other participants, the team and to the ground rules. The outcomes of the introduction sessions were getting to know the group, becoming familiar with the group's expectations, fears and contributions. One of the most important outcomes as well as elements was team building and making sure that the participants start creating safe space. This day also introduced the group to the Council of Europe, ANSO, and the idea of Action Groups, and Home Groups. Organisational Fair resulted in deepened knowledge of the participants' work and networks.

Introductions by team (Monday March 15th)

Background:

- Participants gathered from 23 different countries are bound to have different experiences and expectations for the study session. During the introduction they were given information about the program of the week and working methods. They were introduced to the team and the educational advisor, to the Council of Europe, and to ANSO, the organization behind the event.

Aims:

- To familiarize the group with the team and ANSO, as well as informing of the program and educational development of the week.

Objectives:

- To create an idea of topics addressed during the week, outlining the development of competencies and expectations directed at participants.

Methodology and methods:

- The theme of the study session is introduced to the participants and is connected to ANSO and its work. The group composition is given a short motivation, before the team and educational advisor introduce themselves. The team will then give a visually stimulating introduction to the program, where the flow of the program is motivated, and the different program points are explained.

Ground Rules and Expectations Laurynas Pliusks & Madle Saluveer (Monday March 15th)

Background:

- Participants have been introduced both to the session and ANSO and they were asked to create ground rules and express their expectations and fears for the week.

Aims:

- For the group to create their own ground rules, and to find out about participants' expectations and fears.

Objectives:

- To create a set of ground rules which were guidelines for the session – how participants and a team should behave for mutual feelings of safety within the group. Also to find out about people's expectations, needs and hopes by creating a combined list of all expectations which could be evaluated at the end of the event.

Competencies addressed:

- Communication, listening, group work skills, co-operation,

Methodology and methods:

- Buzz groups (couples), a short discussion 5-10 min on ground rules and then sharing with the big group. One person who facilitates the session wrote down all suggestions and then the list was hung up in the room. All participants were asked to agree with all rules.
- All participants had to cut out t-shirt and boxer shorts shaped figures. The t-shirt shaped figures will be used for expectations; box shorts shaped figures will be used for fears. One point is written on each. When finished everybody was going to hang it on a laundry rope in the rear of the room where everyone could have a look at the fears and expectations. This was later be used in evaluation session.

Team Building by Micah Grzywnowicz (Monday March 15th)

Background:

- The group has already set up ground rules and expectations. Time to get closer and to know each other," to brake the walls" between participants, to know to know each other names. All participants and the prep team took part in it.

Aims:

- To warm up the group and to learn each other's names.

Objectives:

- To play ice break and name games.

Competencies addressed:

- Self expression and communication skills within the group.

Methodology and methods:

- *'Human Fax Machine'* – the group was divided into 5 smaller groups. Each group was asked to sit in a way to create a train (i.e., one person behind another). The last person in the human train was shown a piece of paper with a word. He/she/zie³ were supposed to 'draw' this thing from the piece of paper on the back of a friend in front using only their hand. The person in front was doing the same but basing their 'picture' on the feeling on their back. And the 'drawing' continued. The person who was the first in the train, or the human fax machine was supposed to draw the picture on his/her/hir back on a piece of paper and show it to the others, and also compare it to the original.

Music and cheering were integral parts of the exercise. A short debriefing after the activity took place to discuss the strategies, cooperation and the outcomes.

Council of Europe Introduction by Sonia Breda (Monday March 15th)

³ Zie– gender neutral personal pronoun used to address people, who do not identify with female/male, or used if you do not wish to gender a person without knowing how that person self-identifies.

Background:

- All participants come from Council of Europe member states, but many might be new to Council of Europe, or have little knowledge, depending on which level of focus they are used to in their countries, or in their NGOs.

Aims:

- At the end all the participant shall have a basic understanding of the work of the Council of Europe and the Directorate of Youth and Sport (DYS); participants might want to apply to the European Youth Foundation (EYF) for funding and talk to the colleagues in the house who work on the program; raise participant's interest in other DYS activities

Objectives:

- To familiarize participants with the work and functions of the Council of Europe, in particular the DYS, EYF and the European Youth Centre Strasbourg (EYCS)
- To make participants familiar with the key values, member states, priorities of the Council of Europe and the DYS
- To encourage participants to find out more information about the Council of Europe, DYS, EYF, and the EYCS

Competencies addressed:

- Knowledge on Council of Europe and European Union, their member states and the work done within these institutions.

Methodology and methods:

- 10m Short introduction to the Council of Europe – quiz (statement exercise)
- 20m power point presentation and plenary discussion

Terminology by Pat Kulka (Monday March 15th)

Background:

- As the participants had different experiences with activism, it was important to have a space and chance to exchange opinions and knowledge on various terms which would be used throughout the week.

Aims:

- To establish common understanding of terminology used during the study session

Objectives of the session:

- To provide crucial vocabulary and definitions
- To make participants base on their own experience while thinking of general ideas and definitions
- To make participants come up with common definitions of the ideas that will be handled with during the whole study session

Methods:

- The first part of the session consisted of participants being divided into 7 smaller groups (approximately 5 participants in each) with the task of each of the groups (each group having received different words) being 'creating' definitions for set of terms crucial for the study session (focusing on gender issues, heteronormativity etc).
- In the second part of the session all the newly formed definitions were discussed in the plenary, to make sure everyone agrees with the final versions of definitions, which were put on the wall in some sort of 'vocabulary corner' and later on – put onto paper and sent to all participants (and printed for those who want to).

Organisations' Fair by Sonia Breda (Monday March 15th)

Background:

- The participants had backgrounds from LGBTQ groups, LGBTQ student organizations and student unions, and they had worked with transgender and general LGBTQ-issues in many different ways. It is important they get

a chance to get to know each other's backgrounds, and have the possibility to be inspired by new influences.

Aims:

- To allow participants to get to know each other's work and backgrounds.

Objectives:

- To let participants show the material they had produced in within their organizations.
- To give participants an overview of the other members of the group and a better understanding of whom they would be working with for the week to come.
- To create the possibility to be inspired by the work done by other organizations.

Competencies addressed:

- Sharing experience and creating understanding.

Methodology and methods:

- Carousel: Division into groups, Rounds with questions and rotation of groups.

Action Groups introduction by Laurynas Pliusky (Monday March 15th)

Background:

- Action Groups is a methodology used by ANSO that allows participants themselves develop tools that can be used back in local organisations in everyday work.

Aims:

- To introduce participants to the concept of Action Groups and allow space for brainstorming.

Objectives:

- To map the needs of groups and organizations present at the study session.
- To identify common problems and target areas, but also identify issues specific to regions, groups etc., which should be addressed in the toolkit.
- To enable participants to create tools which will help them identify, address and counteract heteronormativity in higher education.
- To enable participants to work as multipliers, and thereby spreading the knowledge and experiences gained from the study session, and implement the toolkit in their communities.

Competencies addressed:

- Recognizing heteronormativity; developing understanding and knowledge on transgender issues, managing conflicts; strengthening and supporting; creative thinking; analysis of own situations and society structures.

Methodology and methods:

- Thematic groups were presented in the introduction, focusing on different themes related to heteronormativity and higher education. Participants were then to choose groups based on personal interest and thereafter continued to work within that group over the duration of the study session. On the final day of the study session, each group presented their work to the rest of the participants.

Home Groups Introduction by Madle Saluveer (Monday March 15th)

Background:

- Each training course has a strong dimension in looking back in what has been learnt during the day and how that can be transmitted in participants' reality – in this case especially related to the potential development of the organization. This program element provided the necessary space for the evaluation of the contents of the program and their potential transfer into the participants' organizations' reality. It addressed both individual and collective learning.

Aims:

- To reflect on the learning achievements and participants' roles as youth leaders and advocates of LGBTQ youth organizations

Objectives:

- To reflect on and to evaluate the program of the day
- To link the daily experience and learning with the participants organizations' reality and context
- To give space to participants to discuss any open/urgent issues

Competencies addressed:

- Reflection skills and ability to improve or change according to reflections. Also to encourage and support other participants in their learning process or process of integration within the group. Ability to give constructive feedback to team and other participants.

Methodology and methods:

- The participants met regularly in fixed groups at the end of each working day. A team member was assigned to every group and facilitated the meetings.
- The program, experience and the outcomes of the day were used as basis for learning. Some of the methods and approaches used by facilitators in these groups were related to evaluation methods, others to extended learning from the topics or processes of the day. Methods used enabled both individual and collective reflection
- The sessions varied depending on the personal working style of the facilitator/trainer, in general we aimed at the following:
 - To do the feedback of the day (use creative methods)
 - To break language barriers and give shy participants the chance to speak and be heard;
 - To talk about experiences, impressions, feelings; and the learning process of participants

- To have some individual and shared reflection about the learning of the day and how this could be transferred/implemented within their youth organization
- To continue interesting discussions (if not enough time in the plenary), to take care of special needs/individual problems, etc.
- To take care of daily feedback reports within each Home Group
- The group could also think about energizers, which they could propose when appropriate and needed

Day Two

Day two focused on providing information and building competences when it comes to issues such as identity, variety within LGBTQ community, as well as intersectionality and norms. The participants had a chance to explore their own identities, to later be introduced to the work of Del LaGrace Volcano which deals with diversity of identities within LGBTQ movement. Sessions on intersectionality and norms provided basis for the upcoming days since being familiar with those two concepts was crucial for successful continuation of the session.

Identity by Micah Grzywnowicz (Tuesday March 16th)

Background:

- Since the topic of the study session was dealing a lot with identity politics, it was crucial that the participants are capable to explore and relate to their own identities and experiences. The session was used as an exploration of self as well as sharing safe space

Aims:

- To explore one's identity

Objectives:

- To explore the idea of identity
- To provide space for participants to realize their own identities
- To make the participants to reflect on their identities
- To show that identity is usually composed of many different elements (intersectionality)

- To prepare the participants (unconsciously) for the session on stereotypes
- Showing that some elements of identity can be a reason for stereotypes and discrimination
- Showing that some elements of identity are visible and some not
- Showing that dominant/majority identities are less distinctive (so less exposed to oppression)

Competencies addressed:

- Self-reflection, sharing experience, listening, concentration, self-awareness

Methodology and methods:

- Work in threes, work in private, question-answer, sharing experience, drawing, a story writing. Participants worked on their own reflecting on how their present identity has been created and what influenced it. It was focused on identity in general, which meant that all elements of one's identity were supposed to be included in the drawing / story telling / sharing.

Identities by Del LaGrace Volcano – expert input (Tuesday March 16th)

Background:

- After exploring one's own identity, the team wanted to expose the participants to a broader understanding of identities. The scope of identity was focused to gender identity and all possible variations existing in the concept of gender identity. The team invited well-known figure in the queer and transgender movement – Del LaGrace Volcano, who is identity activist, photographer, and the icon admired by many. An input from such an individual was bound to influence the participants a lot, bring up a lot of emotions, and also give them a unique opportunity to meet, talk, and get to know Del better. It was highly appreciated!

Aims:

- To provide participants with pictures and stories of diverse gender identities

Objectives:

- To get to know work of an identity activist – Del LaGrace Volcano
- To experience visual art depicting identities
- To provide participants with visual representations of their own identities and role models in transgender movement
- To make participants aware of a variety of identities
- To explore a concept of gender and fluidity of identities

Competencies addressed:

- Listening, visual learning, critical thinking, questioning

Methodology and methods:

- Presentation of Del's work combined with slides of his art / photography work
- A short film on 'what is gender'
- Questions and answers

Norms by Malou Zilliacus (Tuesday March 16th)

Background:

- The session was important as the participants should be familiar with a concept of heteronormativity and have a common understanding of it in order to be able to proceed with the study session program. The session built on "Introduction to Heteronormativity".

Aims:

- To provide participants with a basic information on the concept of norms.

Objectives:

- To discuss how norms are produced and reproduced

- To discuss privileges and hierarchies and how these are linked to societal norms
- To see the benefits and downsides with norms in a society
- To make the participants reflect on their own role in a normative society
- To make visible the important difference between “tolerance policies” and norm critique
- To show the “heteronormatrix”; the grid on heteronormativity
- To link the heteronorm to the “male norm” (androcentrism), showing how a gender power order is created & established
- To discuss if, how and why “subnorms” can be created in different social groups

Competencies addressed:

- Presentation, critical thinking, sharing experiences, analysis and reflections on personal level.

Methodology and methods:

- Power Point presentation accompanied with questions answered in pairs
- Filling out a “Norm form” (statements on privilege, refer to Appendix 5), followed by group discussions
- Group discussions on heteronormativity in a broad sense; writing on post-its
- Plenary session, putting all the groups' post-its on a big map, clustering them into sectors and ending discussion and summary written on flip-chart

Introduction to Intersectionality by Pat Kulka (Tuesday March 16th)

Background:

- As various socially and culturally constructed patterns of oppression are not only interrelated but are bound together creating a whole system, it was important for participants to be aware of this influence to fully understand the concept of discrimination as such and of heteronormative exclusion in particular.

Aims:

- To provide participants with basic information on intersectionality.

Objectives:

- To make participants understand the concept of intersectionality and to make them aware of the fact that different structures of power and oppression are interconnected and work together;
- To make participants able to notice this mechanism in everyday life and especially in higher education and to analyze it;

Competencies addressed:

- Recognizing intersectionality; analyzing social structures; sharing experience; raising awareness.

Methodology and methods:

- The participants got the basic knowledge of the construct of intersectionality and the theory of matrix of domination.
- The participants were divided in two groups when doing the exercise "Take a step forward".
- Afterwards the two groups came together in plenary for a theoretical introduction to intersectionality.
- Finally, the participants shared own experiences and impressions with the whole group while making the connection between intersectionality and their own experience as activists.

Day Three

Day three continued to build the group's knowledge on gender and transgender issues. It was a mixture of interactive lecture by the invited guest, Josephine Wilson, which was followed by her performance in the evening exploring more transgender issues. The day focused on discussing anti-oppressive pedagogy and norm critical approach as being tools and strategies for activism and advocacy. The outcomes were clearly presented by

the participants' strategic planning on how to use both approaches in their future work. The last session of the day dealing with heteronormativity in higher education gave the participants the opportunity to discuss and challenge their perception of educational systems and norms within them.

Gender and Trans by Josephine Wilson (Wednesday March 17th)

Background:

- Gender and transgender issues are complicated enough in general but if there are 40 people from at least 24 countries, they probably have different ideas, opinions, and experiences connected with those concepts of gender and transgender. Therefore, the team decided to invite Josephine Wilson, who is well-known in the transgender community. She is PhD student exploring transgender identities. She is also acclaimed performer. Josephine's theoretical input gave the participants the chance to get a broader and a bit more theoretical perspective on gender and transgender issues, as well as ask questions, which they found burning and crucial. Josephine also followed up her input with a live performance in the evening.

Aims:

- To provide more theoretical input on concepts of gender and transgender

Objectives:

- To explore what gender and transgender mean from a theoretical perspective
- To understand differences in gender identities and how they are depicted by academia
- To discuss problematisation of genders within the academic and activist settings
- To enable participants to ask questions on how to combine academic / higher education setting with activist movement and how those two could work together in order to improve situation for transgender students.

Competencies addressed:

- Discussion, critical thinking, formulating clear questions, listening,

Methodology and methods:

- Presentation, power point, anecdotes, questions and answers, discussion

Anti-oppressive Pedagogy and Norm Critical Approach by Micah Grzywnowicz (Wednesday March 17th)

Background:

- When working on making environment such as higher education more inclusive and embracing of different gender identities, one has to use a very powerful strategy. It is especially valid when discussing inclusion issues with authorities, or student unions, and teachers who are in position of power at universities and schools. Anti-oppressive pedagogy is to be used in the classrooms, in the corridors, and offices. It is a strategy that can make students' lives a bit easier and safer.

Aims:

- Introducing the participants with the concept of anti-oppressive pedagogy

Objectives:

- To reflect upon and map the challenges participants have encountered in educational setting.
- To identify existing solutions and work towards new possible ways to overcome the challenges.

Competencies addressed:

- Critical thinking about society in general, sharing experiences connected with Heteronormativity, awareness raising.

Methodology and methods:

- Group work on creating process, presentation – performance, open discussion

Heteronormativity in Higher Education by Malou Zilliacus, Madle Saluveer and Sonia Breda (Wednesday March 17th) – session divided in two parts

Background:

- Participants have been introduced to the notion of heteronormativity (HN) earlier during the study session and had time to get acquainted with for at least 2 days. This session was supposed to narrow the concept down to a very specific context of Higher Education.

Aims:

- To make participants aware what consequences HN has in Higher Education (HE)

Part One:

Objectives:

- To introduce the concept of HN (heteronormativity) in higher education
- To reflect on the consequences of HN in the educational system
- To come up with ideas on how to fight HN in higher education
- To find solutions to concrete examples of HN from local situations

Competencies addressed:

- Listening, comprehension, working in groups, critical thinking, analytical thinking, planning skills

Methodology and methods:

- Introductory input on the impact of heteronormativity on the quality of education
- Division into smaller groups; discuss concrete examples on the impact of HN in their own specific university/educational contexts
- Group presentations
- Short encouraging input on how to prevent HN in higher education

- Division into smaller groups again; prepare a sketch showing a specific issue concerning HN in higher education (the sketch is supposed to end in oppression)

Part Two

Objectives:

- To present real life situations of HN and its consequences
- To prepare participants and give them tools for solving problematic situations in real life
- To try out different possible solutions to concrete problems
- To present the theatre of the oppressed method

Methodology and methods:

- Drama; each group presents its sketch
- After each group there is time for analysis and reflection; what just happened? How could it have been prevented? By whom? Where in the process of oppression can we as individuals react?
- Summarizing input on Forum theatre and Theatre of the oppressed as a way of solving conflicts and actually physically practise ways of counteracting oppressing and/or normative situations

***Being Me, Performing Myself* – performance by Josephine Wilson (Wednesday March 17th)**

Background:

- Gender and transgender issues are such an important experiences that discussions or workshops seem to be too little to fully understand the concepts, or at least be able to relate to them. That is why the team decided to invite Josephine Wilson to perform gender and identity, which seemed to be a perfect complementation of her morning session.

The performance was a life changing experience for most of the participants (according to their words not only directly after the performance but also

during the final sessions evaluating the entire study session). Through a very moving and emotionally powerful theatre/dance performance the artist managed to show with passion and delicacy the shades and joys of a life of a trans-person, at times in very sad and heartbreaking way yet full of empowering energy and optimism. This beautiful artistic evening simply couldn't leave anyone indifferent and uninvolved.

Day Four

The first part of day four was devoted to Issue Paper published by the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe. This session was run by invited expert, who presented the publication, gave background information on developments within European framework when it comes to gender identity. He also answered all possible questions that the participants had about the publication as well as work of the CommHR. One of the most interesting elements of this session for the participants was the fact the expert asked for their feedback on the Issue Paper, translations of the document and other issues related to LGBT activism. The rest of the day was free.

Human Rights and Gender Identity, Issue Paper of the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe by Dennis Van Der Veur – expert input (Thursday March 18th)

Background:

- Activist work on European level is very often linked to specific laws, regulations, and institutions. To be familiar with the latest developments in European human rights sector, the team decided to invite an advisor to the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe to talk about a publication addressing gender identity. It was an interesting session as the expert made connections between activism, human rights, institutions and how they all influence each other. The focus given to gender identity was very much appreciated and the participants found it very useful.

Aims:

- To make the participants familiar with the Issue Paper on *Human Rights and Gender Identity*

Objectives:

- To introduce the work of the Commissioner for Human Rights.
- To discuss importance of the publication.
- To explore possibilities of using the Issue Paper in everyday activism
- To provide space for dialogue between activists and a representative of the Commissioner's Office.

Competencies addressed:

- Comprehension, Understanding, Creating links between theory and practice, formulating questions

Methodology and methods:

- Experts' input, participants' experience and practice, in a dialogue approach.
- Questions and answers
- Comments on the Issue Paper from the participants

Day Five

Day five was devoted to putting all gathered knowledge and experience into action. It was done on different levels, both personal and organisational levels. The participants had a chance to plan their revolution and managed to come up with many constructive points on what they should work on. The rest of the day was entirely devoted to a simulation which required using all the knowledge from the session as well as previous expertise of all the participants. They had an opportunity to create and recreate the context they have been working in. They were forced to solve problems faced in everyday lives of LGBTQ students, as well as find ways to cooperate and work together despite of differences. The exercise also gave the participants the chance to work under time pressure with a specific goals, as well as in specific role.

Planning Revolution by Malou Zilliacus and Laurynas Pliusky (Friday March 19th)

Background:

- The group met with the assumption and plan to create a concrete product, which they would be able to implement or at least use in their activism back home. One of the biggest strengths of activists is motivation and belief that they can change existing realities. This session was supposed to bring the whole week of the study session to a more concrete outcomes and possibilities to plan, plan for revolution. Please, refer also to Appendix 6 for outcomes.

Aims:

- To move to practice in creating safe spaces as well as to plan for including universities

Objectives:

- To sum-up the insights from the earlier sessions; to make the movement from theory to action
- To use the participants' own contextual experiences, not distancing the policies from their realities
- To come up with a common document with demanding and encouraging bullet points under different sectors; a document that can be used within ANSO and would actually work with at specific universities

Methodology and methods:

- Introductory input to the topic
- Individual reflection on safer spaces in one's own life
- Division into groups; each group focuses on a sector of higher education and comes up with ways to promote safer and prevent unsafe spaces within these sectors; also thinking of accountability – who should be responsible to ensure safer spaces within the specific sector
- Presentation of group work
- Ending discussion in plenary, summary on flip chart

S(t)imulation by Micah Grzywnowicz (Friday March 19th)

Background:

- The whole week of the study session was focused on personal and organizational experience of the participants as well as building new skills and knowledge. It was time to put all of them into practice and exercise abilities and creativity of the group working together.

Aims:

- To provide the participants with self-made tools on how to work within HE system and work on gender, queer, and equality issues.

Objectives:

- To make participants reflect on their own studying environment
- To make them realize how influential HN is within the educational system
- To let them realize/name challenges at their universities
- To provide the participants with ideas how to counteract HN in HE
- To provide the participants with a safe space where the participants could experiment their strategies, behaviours and co-operation skills when it comes to building alliances and groups working on similar goals.
- To provide the space to exercise the participants' knowledge on gender and queer
- To provide the space to create simulated artificial environment for negotiation, alliances-building, conflict management, discussions, planning etc.,

Competencies addressed:

- Listening, comprehension, working in pairs/groups/teams, critical thinking, analytical thinking, planning skills, negotiation, time management

Methodology and methods:

- Simulation, role-play, open questions, group work,
- Artificially designed reality
- Each participant had their unique role to play
- Aim to reach – need or strategic planning, cooperation, negotiations
- The activity finished with extensive debriefing, and de-roling.

Day Six

The last day of the study session was wrapping up the whole week of work. It was composed of presentations from the action groups, which had space to introduce the rest of the group with the final products of their work during the week. The outcomes ranged from workshops, to board game, to material for student unions, and similar. Please refer to the section of the report dealing with outcomes and follow up. The rest of the day aimed at evaluating the study session in its entirety. The participants got the chance to both evaluate the session on personal level as well as the group.

Presentations from the Action Groups by the Team (Saturday March 20th)

Background:

- Throughout the whole week, the participants were divided into thematic groups working on a specific product that could be later on used for their activism back home. Each day the groups had at least 90min slot in the program to work on their projects. This session was devoted to presentations of all of created products.

Aims:

- To present the tools created by participants, for participants, to apply in their everyday work in their local organizations.

Objectives:

- To present the needs of groups and organizations present at the study session, identified by participants themselves.
- To present the common problems and target areas identified by participants, and the ideas and solutions created throughout the week.
- To share tools which will help activists identify, address and counteract heteronormativity in higher education.
- To inspire and enable participants to work as multipliers and thereby spreading the knowledge and experiences gained from the study session, and implement the toolkit in their communities.

Competencies addressed:

- Recognizing norms; developing knowledge on transgender issues; creative thinking; analysis of own situations and society structures; communication skills and constructive criticism. Ability for future planning and using results for concrete measures.

Methodology and methods:

- Creative presentations by participants.
- After the work was presented by each group the team, the educational advisor and other participants gave feedback to the group. This feedback included constructive criticism, ideas for further development of the group work and funding, as well as ideas for implementing upon arrival to their home organizations. The team also gave their reflections on how the group work results could be useful to ANSO.

Evaluation by Malou Zilliacus, Madle Saluveer, Pat Kulka and Laurynas Pliuskys (Saturday March 20th)

Background:

- After a week of intensive work, it was time to evaluate the process, the group, the team and general feeling of the group. The team prepared a few activities to reach this goal. They ranged from a very creative group tasks, to personal official evaluation forms. It finished with traditional round of reflections and feelings as well as closing remarks from the team.

Aims:

- To present the tools created by participants, for participants, to apply in their everyday work in their local organizations.

Objectives:

- To think of all the processes having happened during the seminar
- To think of the practical follow up
- To give the feedback to the team and to other participants
- To wrap up the learning process of the week

Competencies addressed:

- Discussions
- Creative evaluation
- Filling in the evaluation form

Methodology and methods:

- The evaluation session started with 'a story of the study session', which was read out loud in order to remind the participants what have happened during the week, in order to facilitate upcoming evaluation
- Creative evaluation:
- Participants were divided into 6 groups; each group drew papers with the day of the study session and with type of art (sculpture, modern dance, opera, hip-hop, etc.). Each group had to summarize and express each day of the study session. The team also drew the type of art but expressed the whole study session. There was a limited time for planning and preparations and after that each group had a few minutes to present their 'artwork'.
- It was followed by an official evaluation forms
- The session finished with 'the round' of reflections

4. IDEAS AND NEW PROJECTS

The study session had many new projects and ideas surfacing during the week and in the months after. Many of these resulted in new networks and cooperation between participants on an individual level, and between organisations. Ideas created during and after the study session has been communicated to the team and to ANSO, and as part of the follow up ANSO is involved in different ways, either as a guide in the jungle of funding applications, as co-organisers, or in general giving advice on how to future develop the projects and ideas.

“GenderQueer University” gave the activists associated with the ANSO network the opportunity to see how the fight against heteronormativity and particular focus on transgender issues are organised in other countries, thus giving a new surge of energy to make change on local or national level. This surge of energy in turn multiplies within the network and has inspired actions and plans for future events. One such example was ideas for the whole project focusing on transgender issues within the framework of ANSO.

The session has also inspired a new study session for 2011 about gender and transgender based on a non-heteronormative, norm critical approach. Here we hope to gather some of the participants from “GenderQueer University” for continued development, as well as other LGBTQ activists with other experiences, and especially those who wish to develop their gender and transgender activism.

Many of the ideas should not be seen as a product of the study session alone. However, the influence, inputs and ideas discussed in the different sessions are apparent in much of the work that has been done after the study session. ANSO’s Swedish member organisation hosted a conference for ANSO’s member organisations. At this event the concept of heteronormativity, especially connected to gender, was developed further, and much of the work was based on the learning points from Strasbourg.

5. Follow up

5.1 Projects developed

Projects were mainly developed in action groups. These were groups chosen by participants themselves based on interest. The groups would gather one each day to develop their idea and their product. Examples of some of the outcomes can be found below:

- **The Guide for Student Unions**

The guide was entitled "Towards and Equality Plan at Your University: 8 Steps for a Student Union Equality Officer". It was composed of 8 concrete steps how to create and pass equality plan at one's university. It had concrete examples, including helpful links to how to start, implement and follow up on the equality plan.

- **Transgender and Intersex Training for the Workplace**

This was a fully designed workshop targeting various work places from education system, to health professionals, to armed forces, police and security. It included legal framework of the European Union and the Council of Europe regarding anti-discrimination as well as practical issues one should keep in mind when considering work place and discrimination. The workshop was used at one of the transgender events in Germany and was run by 2 participants from the study session.

- **Empowerment workshop**

This was a fully designed workshop focusing on empowering of LGBTQ students. The team working on it presented the workshop and its objectives. It involved music, movement and concrete actions to be taken during the workshop.

- **"Have You ever Wondered..." document**

This was a two-page document addressing heteronormativity and its effect on students and youth. It had also concrete points showing how heteronormativity influence students and why they should care to challenge it. The document also has a short introduction to what

heteronormativity is so that persons not familiar with the concept can easily get acquainted. The document was translated to French and Russian; the original is in English.

- **The board game**

This product is a direct continuation of the previous study session when the process of designing the game was started. The heteronormative board game was designed to challenge the norm in a fun, interactive way. The game is for 2 or more players and should be easily accessible, even made as a template possible to download online. It was finalized, it got a shape, playing cards, rules, questions, and it was also tested during the final presentation.

5.2 Follow-up activities

A main tool for follow-up was a letter the participants wrote to themselves, Letter to Myself. This was saved by the team and then mailed to participants 3 months later to remind them of the atmosphere, the energy and the promises for continued work that participant made to themselves at the end of the study session. They also made a project plan for structuring their post-session work.

Participants themselves pointed out the following as part of their multiplying efforts:

- Applying for funding to print the board game
- Continued cooperation with participants and the organizations they represent
- Lectures and workshops based on what they learned, either in their organization or in their university in general
- Influencing policy-making
- Sharing materials and contacts within their organisation
- Education their boards on transgender issues
- Writing about the study sessions in reports to their boards,
- Using the study session as a platform for learning more about transgender, sexuality and equality

6. FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

“GenderQueer University: Questioning Norms in Higher Education” is, by the organisers, considered a big success, considering the development during the study session, its outcomes and the feedback from participants and others. Tangible outcomes developed by participants themselves make the study session a valuable contribution to many young activists and their respective organisations. The session should also be seen as forum for reflection, for self-expression and for personal growth in a safe space, which for LGBTQ people often is not the case. And for those who had little LGBTQ knowledge beforehand it was a comfortable setting for raising questions and developing a better understanding.

There were many issues raised during the study session that can and should be reflected in LGBTQ activism, in student activism, in European youth work, and in Council of Europe’s work to improve their take on gender, sexuality and the many other structures of power and inequality. In general much can be gained by looking beyond the scope by looking at structures of discrimination and inequality, not only the outcomes, through norm critical approaches.

During the study session the organisers, participants and the organisations they represent had a chance to develop on personal and organisational levels in their work for equality and against heteronormativity in higher education. The team hopes that the outcomes in turn will reach out to a wider audience and affect coming generations of student who are met with the ideal that everyone is equal and have equal rights and opportunities, and that these ideals in fact manifest themselves in reality.

Lastly, thanks must be given to everyone who made “GenderQueer University” possible: the team, the Council of Europe, the staff at the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg, the Educational Advisor, and finally all the most important group of all: the participants, who dedicated so much more than the study session week to work against heteronormativity and transgender inclusion in higher education as young activists all over Europe and beyond.

7. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Final Program

Appendix 2: "Introduction to Queer and Heteronormativity"

Appendix 3: "Some definitions"

Appendix 4: "A Helping Hand"

Appendix 5: "Teaching Can Never Be a Neutral Activity"

Appendix 6: "Norm Form"

Appendix 7: "How to Prevent Heteronorm in Higher Education?"

Appendix 1: Final Program

	SUNDAY 14.03	MONDAY 15.03	TUESDAY 16.03	WEDNESDAY 17.03	THURSDAY 18.03	FRIDAY 19.03	SATURDAY 20.03
9:15-11:00	ARRIVALS	Introduction	Identity	gender & transgender	Action groups	Equality plans	Action groups presentations
11:00-11:30		International Break	International Break	International Break	International Break	International Break	International Break
11:30-13:00		Expectations	Identities	anti-oppressive pedagogy and norm critical approach	Gender Identity and Human Rights Issue Paper - Expert input	S(t)imulation	Action groups presentations
13:00-14:00		Team building Lunch					
14:00-15:30		14:00-15:00 Terminology	Intersectionality + Norms; heteronormatrix; creating new norms	Local realities; Heteronormativity in Higher Education and its consequences	Free time	S(t)imulation	Action plan, developing future projects
15:30-16:00		15:30-16:30 presenting posters combined with International Break	International Break	International Break		International Break	International Break
16:00-17:30		16:30-17:00 Action groups	Action groups	Accessibility & inclusion	Free time	Action groups	Evaluation part 2.
17:30-18:15		17:00/17:30-.. Home groups	Home groups	Home groups		Home groups	Home groups + letter to self
19:00-20:00		Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner in the city	Dinner	Dinner
Evening	Welcome evening	International cultural evening	Movie evening	Non-alcohol evening / game night	Party in the city	Non-alcohol evening / queer-stories reading	Farewell party

Appendix 2: Introduction to Queer and Heteronormativity

This section includes the content of a document participants were sent before the study session as background information about the subject matter of the study session.

Important to know is that queer as a term is one of very flexible nature, and you will get as many different replies as you ask persons to define the term. It is in the nature of queer to be impossible to give a fixed explanation. But to give some sort of overview and introduction to the term, queer is at least three different and parallel notions: It is an academic theory, studying the norms of society, instead of the so-called deviants. It is an activism, a resistance of fixed categories and identities. AND, contradictory enough, queer is an identity.

Short historical introduction

Queer is a word with history in the English language, meaning originally odd, weird etc, and has throughout the years been used as an insult. It has also been used as a synonym to gay. Queer was reclaimed in the early 1990s, when Queer Nation started spreading flyers in New York (The Queer Nation Manifesto) encouraging all "queers" to take the word back, reclaim power over their lives, raise their voices, to never accept the discrimination, the benevolence or the victimization. They aimed at society at large, but also at the gay movement, with its limiting terms like gay or lesbian, without space for distrusted bisexuals or transgender people. Queer has since been introduced or translated into several foreign languages and is an established academic discipline in several countries.

What is different with a queer perspective?

Queer changes focus of attention, from studying the "deviant" to studying "normality", to the ruling norms and why those norms are controlling our lives. To give an example, it is uninteresting to study "the homosexual", what is interesting is to study heterosexuality as the god-given rule. To make heterosexuality, and above all heteronormativity, the problem that needs addressing. "We're here, we're queer, get used to it!" A consequence of studying heteronormativity instead of the "deviant" homosexual is that you can make some "in-your-face strategies". Basically this means that you do not apologize

for not being heterosexual and do not try to adjust or assimilate into a heteronormative perspective. According to queer, there is no such thing as deviant; it is the norms that make some people deviants, that create deviance, not the people disobeying to constructions made by whoever was in power at the time.

Queer versus sexual orientation?

The queer perspective points to the uselessness of categories such as gender and sexual orientation, and claims that these are merely social constructions that we are taught. Queer does not believe in a binary gender system, meaning that there are not only two genders but a great variation. Consequently, queer does not believe in sexual orientations, if you for instance do not believe in the notion of only two genders, terms like homosexual, bisexual or heterosexual becomes meaningless. How can you be *b*isexual if there are no two genders? (*Bi* meaning two or both).

Heteronormativity?

Queer points to heteronormativity, that teaches us to be good heterosexuals, good women and good men, rewarding those who obey the system and punishing those who do not. Heteronormativity causes people to limit themselves to stereotypes of women or men, and expects women to be feminine and men to be masculine, that they are each other's opposites and completion, that they attract and need each other. If a person does not behave according to this pattern, there will be a price to pay, which may include social exclusion, stigma, invisibility or physical or mental abuse. Heteronormativity provides the base for discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. We argue that if we fight heteronormativity, we also fight the fundamentals of hate crime, of stereotyping, of gender roles, of limitations of whom you can be and whom you are allowed to love.

What about terminology?

The queer position means striving for dissolving categories and fixed identities. It means that terms as gay, lesbian, bisexual and heterosexual lose its meaning, as do categories like men and women. If you engage in identity politics like we do, this might be a bit inconvenient. ☺

It is important to remember though, that regardless of the queer position, we are still labelled by others, judged by others and identified by others, and we therefore experience discrimination and prejudice because of the categories like woman or man, homo- bi- or heterosexual or transgender. That is why we still have to use these categories when fighting for equal rights, but understanding a queer position might help us to better understand the variety of people and their identities, and be less judgmental ourselves. In the queer utopia, the discriminatory structures and limiting gender and sexuality borders are gone, and people are able to take whatever position desired in their relations to their own gender and gender expression as well as in relations to others.

Heteronormativity in Higher Education

One of the main aims of ANSO, the organizer of the Study Session, is fighting heteronormativity in higher education. We believe that Higher Education is a key factor in changing society and reproducing norms, and as long as academia do not welcome all students, or ignore the reality of many citizens, prejudice will be reproduced over and over again. We would like this study session to provide the participants with knowledge about discriminatory structures in seemingly neutral contexts and with arguments on why higher education needs to address heteronormativity, and make visible strategies to counteract inequalities.

Appendix 3: "Some definitions"

This section includes the content of a document participants were sent before the study session as background information about the subject matter of the study session. This paper was prepared by ANSO. These definitions are followed by the organisation in its work.

Sexual orientations:

Heterosexuality: ability of being attracted emotionally and/or sexually by someone perceived to be of the "opposite" sex

Homosexuality: ability of being attracted emotionally and/or sexually by someone perceived of the same sex

Bisexuality: ability of being attracted emotionally and/or sexually by women and men

*Sometimes **Asexuality** is included among the sexual orientations:*

Asexual people do not experience sexual attraction, but are emotionally attracted to other people, and would form relationships with them, without engaging in sexual relations.

Sex: biological sex, assigned at birth or later and stated in your passport. Usually sub-divided into "male" or "female".

Gender: Gender is commonly used interchangeably with sex, but when sex refers to biology, gender refers to for instance gender roles and how we behave, often referred to as social constructs. One could say that *gender* is to *sex*, what e.g. *femininity* is to *woman*. Gender roles are taught and learned from day one of our lives.

Gender identity: a person's self-identified and self-perceived gender. Might be e.g. female, male, intergender.

Gender expression: how you express your gender through for instance clothing, accessories, hair, voice or body language. Might be masculine, feminine, both or something else altogether.

LGBT(Q) – Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (and Queer)

Lesbian – woman attracted to other women

Gay – man attracted to other men

Bisexual – person attracted to both women and men

Transgender is an umbrella term for different transgender identities and expressions

Queer is questioning norms regarding sex, gender and sexuality. An important aspect of queer is to question and study normality instead of the “deviant” created by normality. Some people identify as *queer*, it might mean that you are not conforming to norms of gender or that you are non-straight.

Transgender people are people whose gender identity and/or gender expression sometimes or always are non-conforming to that of the norm of the sex they were assigned at birth. Transgender people can have any sexual orientation. *Transgender* is sometimes shortened to *trans*, and is used in different contexts, i.e. trans people, trans issues etc.

Cisgender people are people whose gender identity and/or gender expression are conforming to that of the norm of the sex they were assigned at birth. Cisgender people can have any sexual orientation. *Cisgender* is sometimes shortened to *cis*, and is used in different contexts, i.e. cis people, cis questions etc.

Drag king: Usually female bodied or identified people playing with masculine gender expressions, as an act or political strategy. Can be, but is usually not an identity but a behavior.

Drag queen: Usually male bodied or identified people playing with feminine gender expressions, as an act or political strategy. Can be, but is usually not an identity but a behavior.

Intergender: Person identifying between or beyond the traditional genders, or choosing not to identify the gender identity at all, a gender identity.

Intersex is a general term used for a variety of conditions in which a person is born with a reproductive or sexual anatomy that doesn't seem to fit the typical definitions of female or male. Might be ambiguous genitalia or other physical sexual characteristics, there are a number of medical diagnoses and about 1% of babies born have an intersex condition. The extent to which intersex people are transgender is debated, since not all intersex people disagree with their gender assigned at birth.

Cross-dresser (transvestite): Person who more or less often, partially or completely, dresses and behaves according to the “opposite sex”.

Transsexual: Person who identifies as, or desires to live and be accepted as, a member of the gender opposite to that assigned at birth. Many transsexuals also

want to change their bodies. These physical changes are collectively known as *sex reassignment therapy* and often include hormones and *sex reassignment surgery, SRS*. References to "pre-operative", "postoperative" and "non-operative" transsexual people indicate whether they have had, or are planning to have sex reassignment surgery. **MtF** means Male to Female and **FtM** means Female to Male. The last word indicates the pronoun you should use, an MtF wants to be addressed *her, she, hers*.

Heteronormativity: Norms about that women and men are expected to be different from each other, that you have to be male or female and that the "natural" is that women fall in love with and are attracted to men and the other way around. Heteronormativity is everything that makes heterosexuality seem as the only natural and wanted alternative, and makes deviants of people and relations that do not fit the expected pattern.

Gender neutral pronouns: for instance *hir* or *ze/zie*. These pronouns can be used when speaking or referring to people who do not identify as male or female, or if you do not want to decide the gender of somebody.

Homophobia: a term used to describe irrational fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against homosexuals or anyone suspected of being homosexual. It can also mean hatred, hostility, disapproval of, or prejudice towards homosexuals. Terms like *heterosexism* have been proposed as alternatives that are more morphologically parallel, and which do not have the association with phobia. Heterosexism refers to the privileging of heterosexuality over homosexuality.

Internalized homophobia: refers to homophobia carried by individuals against homosexual manifestations in themselves and others. It causes severe discomfort with or disapproval of one's own sexual orientation.

Such a situation may cause extreme repression of same-sex desires. In other cases, a conscious internal struggle may occur for some time, often pitting deeply held religious or social beliefs against strong sexual and emotional desires. This discordance often causes clinical depression, and the unusually high suicide rate among gay teenagers (up to 30 percent of non-heterosexual youth attempt suicide) has been attributed to this phenomenon.

Some homosexuals feel that bisexuality and transgenderism are threatening to the social and political acceptance of gays and lesbians. This phenomenon has also been called internalized homophobia by some people. *Straight acting* is by

some argued to be a result of internalized homophobia, usually homo- or bisexual men whose behavior and appearance resemble those of the straight male stereotype.

Biphobia: is a term used to describe the fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against bisexuals or LGBT people who are bisexual or perceived to be bisexual. It can also mean hatred, hostility, disapproval of, or prejudice towards LGBT people, sexual behavior, or cultures.

Homosexual people will sometimes see bisexuals as maintaining privilege in a heterosexual context while simultaneously benefiting from opportunities in LGBT communities. Some consider the belief that people are either heterosexual or homosexual. Both those views can be argued to be biphobic.

Transphobia: refers to fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against transgender people, or people who transgress (or are perceived to transgress) norms of gender, gender identity or gender expression. Many trans people also experience homophobia from people who incorrectly associate the medically different gender expressions as a form of homosexuality. Some in the LGBT communities are uncomfortable with transgender individuals and issues.

For example, transwomen (male-to-female transgender and transsexual people) are sometimes denied entry to women's spaces, and the explanations given for such actions betray a degree of transphobia.

Higher education: as all stages of education following upper secondary education levels and types at universities and other institutions of higher education, also known as tertiary education.

Student union: comparable to a trade union, but for students. Usually based on voluntary membership, working for improving the conditions of the student body, quality of education and sometimes but not always for human rights.

National Union of Students, NUS: national organization of local student unions. Usually based on voluntary membership by the local student unions, to create a stronger voice for student conditions on a national level. Important parts of work might be lobbying on a national level and support of the local student unions.

ESU: European Students' Union has 47 members from 36 countries in Europe. Membership is open to National Unions of Students:

- That are democratic, representative and independent

- Who are open to all students in the country regardless of their political conviction, religion, ethnic or cultural origin, sexual orientation, social standing
- That are run and controlled by students
- That run democratic elections. The aim of ESU is to represent and promote the educational, social, economic and cultural interests of students at a European level towards all relevant bodies and in particular the European Union, Bologna Follow-Up Group, Council of Europe and UNESCO.

ANSO: Association of Nordic and Pol-Balt LGBTQ Student Organizations is an umbrella organization for LGBTQ (student) groups or organizations in northern Europe. ANSO fights discrimination based on homophobia and transphobia in universities and aims to increase the quality of higher education by fighting heteronormativity.

ANSO supports local student organizations so they can both be safe places for LGBTQ students and be an important part of its local university community. ANSO believes in solidarity across borders and works for LGBTQ rights internationally when possible.

Bologna process: The purpose of the Bologna process is to create a European Higher Education Area by making academic degree standards and quality assurance standards more comparable and compatible throughout Europe. With the Bologna process implementation, higher education systems in European countries are to be organized in such a way that:

- it is easy to move from one country to the other (within the European Higher Education Area) – for the purpose of further study or employment;
- the attractiveness of European higher education is increased so many people from non-European countries also come to study and/or work in Europe;
- the European Higher Education Area provides Europe with a broad, high quality and advanced knowledge base, and ensures the further development of Europe as a stable, peaceful and tolerant community benefiting from a cutting edge European Research Area;
- there will also be a greater convergence between the U.S. and Europe as European higher education adopts aspects of the American system.

Queer vs. tolerance pedagogy: *Tolerance pedagogy* works with creating understanding and tolerance for the deviant, while *queer pedagogy* challenges heterosexual norms and privileges. For instance, a teacher with a tolerance pedagogical approach might talk about homosexuality in class with only good

intentions, but assuming that nobody in the room is actually themselves concerned personally or by family, which gives the “us” the possibility to discuss and judge the “them” out there. A queer pedagogical approach do not assume that presence or absence, it examines heteronormativity instead of the people who do not obey to the norms, and demands change of oppressing or discriminatory structures.

Intersectionality is a theory that examines the ways in which various socially and culturally constructed categories interact to manifest themselves as inequality in society. An intersectional approach takes into account how different power relations are intertwined and how different identities are created as a result of for instance ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class, ability, religious belief or age. Black feminist thinker Audre Lorde once said, *“There are no single-issue struggles because we do not live single-issue lives”*. We have to look at how different oppressions intersect in order to understand people’s different conditions and experiences, and how they are contextual.

Polyamory: Polyamory is the desire, practice, or acceptance of having more than one loving and/or intimate relationship at a time with the full knowledge and consent of everyone involved. It is an umbrella term that covers many orientations and modes of relationship. It is grounded in such concepts as choice, trust, equality of free will, and the more novel idea of comparison, rather than in cultural or religious tradition. The word comes from Greek, (*poly* meaning many or several) and Latin (*amor* literally meaning love).

Monogamy is the custom or condition of having only one mate in a relationship, thus forming a couple. The word monogamy comes from the Greek word *monos*, which means one or alone, and the Greek word *gamos*, which means marriage or union.

Appendix 4: "A Helping Hand"

This section includes the content of a document participants were sent before the study session as background information about the subject matter of the study session.

A helping hand

in deconstructing heteronormative literature

Authors: Sofia B.
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Elstad

Why, what, who?

Higher education is heteronormative. A norm –at first sight not obvious, is embedded within the educational system: the norm of heterosexuality. The norm praises heterosexuality as the normal, natural and wanted. This norm excludes a lot of people and make them seen as "outsiders". What is classified as abnormal, unnatural or unwanted according to the norm, i.e. homosexuality, bisexuality, transgender people or certain expressions of heterosexuality, is often reduced, deprived of value or even falsified. The consequences are not only grave for all persons involved, it is also a sign of poor quality of science. Universities help to reproduce prejudice and negative opinions in the society and help to uphold discriminatory structures.

The Swedish Federation of LGBTQ Student Organizations (SFQ) is working against heteronormativity and heterosexism in higher education. In this way we believe we can fight discrimination and violations of human rights. One instrument we use is the Equal Treatment of Students at Universities Act (SFS 2001:1286), which requires all universities work actively against discrimination. "A helping hand" is part of this work and is made with the support of Allmänna Arvsfonden, a Swedish foundation supporting diversity projects among others. We have received alarming information on contents of textbooks used at universities as carriers of homophobia or heteronormativity, information supported by the increasing amount of reports to HomO (The Ombudsman against Discrimination on grounds of Sexual Orientation) on the subject. We are aware that many universities have ambitions and a will to address the problem but so far there has been very few tools available for this kind of work.

We hope that our experiences and this tool will help those who want to examine “their own” courses from a heteronormativity perspective. It might be equality secretaries, quality evaluators, diversity coordinators as well as teachers, professors or students. We also have an ambition to develop this leaflet, so please, feel free to share recommendations, experiences or comments.

Pleasant reading and good luck!

Stockholm, 25th of March 2006

Sofia B. Karlsson	Pär Wiktorsson
Project Manager	Vice president SFQ

Where to start?

1. Who decided what textbooks to use? What was this person thinking when the list was made? Has the person tried, my means of choosing different authors with different backgrounds and experiences, to create a fair and actual picture of the subject discussed? How does it look when it comes to gender representation of the authors?

Authors' backgrounds and experiences are relevant, in order to paint a fair and accurate picture of a subject or topic. Sexual orientation, religious belief, ethnic or socio-economic background cannot be “controlled” by simply checking the literature list, and this is why gender representation is easier to check and reflect about. Women and men have different experiences through the socialisation of separate gender roles that deeply effect how our lives are formed. These different experiences must be reflected in the literature contents, to show the diversity of reality. White, heterosexual, western men have for a long time had monopoly to present scientific truths within higher education, results that we find in today's education. This has to be questioned, based on the fact that reality is described in many different ways, depending on who you are and what your relation is to the ruling norms.

2. Question if the text assumes heterosexuality. Reflect on how much space hetero-, homo- and bisexuality have respectively in the textbooks and its meaning for the context.

If hetero-, homo-, and bisexuality are not handled and questioned under the same circumstances, there is a risk that the heteronorm is preserved. To not even mention sexual orientation is not a solution of the problem since this often means that heterosexuality is taken for granted. When fighting the heteronorm,

it might seem like a good idea to have a separate section on homosexuality, to escape making it invisible. But this also requires underlining of the fact that the rest of the text only deals with heterosexuality or else the picture of homosexuality as something deviant is reinforced. To create a non-judging picture of the three sexual orientations, they all have to be given amount of attention and should be discussed and questioned in the same way.

3. Think about different ways of reading the text, which starting-point does the author have? Is the author careful to point out that something is not homosexual even though it is irrelevant and without "evidence"?

An example might be a relationship between two women, not defined, which is assumed to be friendly and non-erotic even though there is no "evidence" proving neither one thing nor the other. Why is this being remarked? When describing and writing our history it has been (and still is) important to deny rumours about homo- or bisexuality since these kinds of rumours probably was seen as drawing attention from the relevant issues of different historical individuals. A more vicious interpretation could be that you do not want key persons in history to get a "bad" reputation; it is in all cases much safer with the ordinary and implied heterosexual. At the same time history gets distorted and a carrier of the norm.

4. Check if homo- and bisexuality are related to something that is not relevant for the sexual orientation. Are generalizations being made? If that is the case, do these generalizations add anything for understanding the text?

There are problems with generalizations and prejudices about those who do not fit the heteronorm. If it is not obvious to discover, you can try to change the word homosexual to heterosexual, how does the statement come across then? If it turns out to be a strange way of describing heterosexuals and heterosexuality, then it is probably just as strange a way of describing others! You can also check in what contexts homo- and bisexuality are being mentioned. Is it in a context where heterosexuality could/should be mentioned?

5. Look out for discussions with a starting-point, which is violating someone's rights.

To be treated with respect and in the same way as other individuals is a universal right, no matter what sexual orientation or gender identity you have. That right cannot be questioned! In textbooks used, a lot of different discussions might be brought up, for example different ethical questions. Sometimes questions like homosexuality or homosexuals' parenting suitability are questions

for discussion. Schools and universities have a responsibility not to reduce this universal right to be a matter of discussion! To show the absurdity of a statement, try to change the word homosexual to heterosexual, Muslim or Jew. Heteronormativity can sometimes conceal that it is as insulting to question LGBT people's rights as anyone else's. It might be a good idea to raise the subject to prevent homophobia, but then the obvious starting-point should be why homophobia is so widely spread, and why it might be that people cannot respect other people's right to equality and same rights regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.

6. Check if homosexuality is seen as something primarily between men? How is women's sexuality described?

Women's sexuality is generally often reduced and homosexuality between women is mostly not perceived as threatening as homosexuality between men, possibly because men are assumed to be more active and more sexual than women. Homo- and bisexuals are often over-sexualized in a way that heterosexuals are not. To some people, homosexuality is just something about "what people do in bed", while very few would relate to heterosexuality in that way. Heteronormativity works together with oppression of gender, which makes many descriptions of reality untrue and unrealistic. It is also closely related to other norms, e.g. regarding ethnicity or ability.

7. Question the relevancy of describing the origin of homo- and bisexuality.

If it is relevant to describe possible reasons of why people belong to different sexual orientations, check carefully that it is not only the origin of homosexuality needing to be explained. If you do not explain why heterosexuals become heterosexual as well, you have automatically classified everything else as deviant and abnormal. The issue is extra sensitive since there is present research trying to explain what has "gone wrong" with homo- and bisexuals, though results are highly speculative.

Act for a change

1. Find the right way to carry out a scrutiny of educational materials.

In order to scrutinize textbooks, the person performing the task has to have an idea of what to look for, and take into account issues mentioned above. This person might have special competences of the relevant subject, as well as basic understanding of heteronormative structures. At the same time, it is important that regular quality systems also catch insulting and/or erroneous textbooks. Specific questions when evaluating courses might also help.

2. Do not use literature or educational material that describe homo- and bisexuality or transgender people in a disrespectful way, even though the rest of the book maintains high standard.

It is imperative the school takes a stand actively for everyone's equal value and equal rights, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity and gender expression. To use a book even though it has discriminating contents is to ignore the violation, even if you explain to the students that those parts are problematic.

If it is impossible to remove the book, demand that the discriminating parts are brought to the students' attention and questioned. To leave it unspoken of means that the students assume it is correct information or a correct standpoint.

3. Be very careful if using insulting textbooks as basis for discussions.

There have been claims that textbooks with insulting contents about LGBT issues is being used as basis for discussions. It has, for example, been about textbooks describing how sick homosexuality is and how you, in different ways, can "cure" homosexuality. In these situations you have to be extremely careful. Using discriminatory textbooks can be one way to show insults and discrimination, but it must be handled as something violating and nothing else. The teacher or facilitator must have the required competence and must be aware of the risks using this kind of textbooks. The discussion can easily get out of hand and individual students get hurt and/or violated, even if it started out with good intentions.

4. Keep a register of the books scrutinized with remarks or positive aspects.

Examining textbooks can be a big task and might take a long time. To avoid that the work is being done twice and to prevent today's lesson learned from being forgotten it is important to keep records of the findings. Spread the information to others who might have an interest in it – preferably also outside your own school or university.

5. Demand change at the publishing house.

If pressured from several directions, textbooks could change for the better. Of course publishing houses listen to their clients. Publishers could search for other authors or influence the ones they are employing. Authors can in many cases be willing to listen to criticism directly, but within the academy there are also a lot

of authors who do not want to be questioned. Even if an author is willing to change the contents, the book or text has to be reprinted by the publishers in order to achieve any effect.

6. Use the power of the example

A lot of educational material is produced by universities themselves, for example instructions from teachers in charge, different booklets etc. If you want to address the problem of insulting material from external authors, you naturally have to examine your own material to maintain trustworthiness. A simple recommendation is always to use examples that include both same-sex couples and heterosexuals when you produce material for education, as well as both transgender and cisgender people.

Appendix 5: "Teaching Can Never Be a Neutral Activity"

This section includes the content of a document participants were given during the session related to anti-oppressive pedagogy and norm critical approach.

This paper can be found at http://www.wiu.edu/users/mitfeh/ptf_barn.htm

Teaching can never be a neutral activity...

Despite the current boom in Lesbian and Gay Studies and Queer Theory, most campuses remain hostile environments for gay, lesbian, and bisexual (hereafter referred to as gay) students, staff, and faculty. Gay students continue to face formal discrimination in campus housing and benefits policies, and informal persecution from homophobic peers and teachers, and from an institutional apparatus that still excludes gays from its curriculum.

Gay concerns must not be ghettoized to the pitifully few departments, programs, and courses in Queer Theory and Lesbian and Gay Studies. They must infiltrate every aspect of every curriculum. I write these suggestions, then, for the teacher who is not teaching a Queer Theory or Lesbian and Gay Studies class, but who nevertheless is committed to the work of decentring heterosexuality in the classroom and in the social realms that the classroom produces and is produced by.

Teaching can never be a neutral activity. The ways we define our disciplines, the texts we teach, the ways in which we teach them, the ways we set up our classrooms, the methods by which we evaluate our students - all these choices (whether our own or not) embody specific ideological assumptions and have far-reaching effects both inside and outside the classroom. Any anti-homophobic pedagogy will impact all methodologies and epistemologies, both those explicitly concerned with homosexuality and those which seem to be ignorant of - or even hostile to - gay concerns. Whether we teach gay texts or not, whether in fact we have any say over the texts we teach or not, it is in the ways in which we read and teach all texts and the ways in which we organize our classrooms and construct our students that we must most relentlessly deploy anti-homophobic agendas.

(1) Do not assume that all your students are straight.

Such an assumption reinforces the invisibility that most gay students already suffer. Too often when discussing gay issues, even well-meaning teachers (including gay and lesbian teachers) use words like "you", "us", and "them" in a manner that suggests everyone in the classroom is straight or implies that gays exist only in some comfortably distant space (San Francisco?).

It's a good idea to remember (and to tell our students) that at least one person in ten is lesbian, gay, or bisexual; we are almost certain to have at least some gays in our class. When we ask questions of students or use examples in the classroom we should not assume that students are heterosexual. Some exercises designed to contest homophobia actually end up reinforcing it. For instance, role-playing exercise where students "imagine" what their world would be like if they were gay, or "heterosexual questionnaires" that ask respondents how their heterosexuality was constructed, are great tools for raising heterosexual consciousness, but at the expense of obliterating the identities of gay students in the class.

(2) Set an example by not using heterosexist language.

In the classroom, we must avoid examples or language that reinforce peoples' assumptions that everyone is heterosexual, that only heterosexuals should be addressed or discussed, or that heterosexuality should be the centre of the universe. For instance, rather than saying "if a woman wants to bring her boyfriend to the dance...", we can say "if a woman brings her partner..." or "...girlfriend or boyfriend". We need to tell our students that they need to be alert to their own use of heterosexist/homophobic language in their comments in the classroom and in their papers; this includes overtly homophobic terms such as "fag" or "dyke" and presumptions of universal heterosexuality ("any woman would die to spend the night with Brad Pitt").

We can explain that such language silences gay students in the classroom, who should not be expected to assert or justify their sexual/affectional orientation. We ourselves must consistently challenge homophobic stereotypes, assertions, and jokes if students, texts, or other teachers make them. Often, gay and gay-supportive students will be too frightened to challenge homophobia in the classroom setting. They rely on us for leadership in setting a positive and supportive example and to make the classroom a safe environment for them.

(3) Do not tokenize gay concerns in your syllabus.

Sometimes teachers want to include gay issues in their courses, but do so by marginalizing these issues, relegating them to one week in a fifteen-week course, to one optional reading at the end of the semester, etc. As a result, students get the message that these issues are not important, that they are an afterthought, or that they are too controversial to be included in the main body of the course. Not unexpectedly, then, many students will respond accordingly: with hostility.

I try to say the words "lesbian", "gay" or "bisexual" with great ease and informality when discussing gay issues. My message is that gay issues are an important and legitimate field of academic inquiry and not to be talked about in a hushed or awkward to me. If gay issues are presented in a non-sensationalistic manner, students will usually respond accordingly. I have been surprised to notice how quickly my students begin to initiate discussions of gay issues and how many of them--of all sexual orientations--choose to write papers and facilitate presentations on gay topics.

(4) Ensure that your students have easy access to addressing gay issues and that gay students feel they can make their voices heard.

This means not only including gay issues in our discussions, but also using gay texts in our courses and inviting papers and projects that present gay perspectives and anti-homophobic analyses. Students should understand that anyone in the class may write such a paper if they are interested in gay issues and that students who choose to do so are not marking themselves as gay or lesbian (which is not to deny the possibility that some gay or lesbian students might want to come out in the classroom).

(5) Do not base a course on "open-ended" topics, discussions, or texts.

Too often as teachers we feel that we are doing the right thing by assigning our students "open-ended" essay topics or by inviting students to argue "both" sides of a controversial current event. The ideologies and institutions of liberal pluralism tell us that this is the way to promote "free speech" or "democratic" argument. But these kinds of topics and discussions have the effect of privileging dominant power relations and of further silencing our gay students. For example, if we ask our students to debate about whether homosexuality is "wrong": or not, we are expecting our gay students to justify their existence, and we would invite homophobic remarks. Would we ask our students to debate the rightness or wrongness of heterosexuality or racism?

Gay students have a right to expect not to be wounded in this way in the classroom. Teachers should avoid texts that adopt this type of pro and con approach (i.e., most generic composition readers) and should create assignments that do not invite homophobic responses. For example, instead of asking students whether homosexuality is wrong or not, we might ask them to analyze a homophobic article, explaining who they think the intended audience is, what assumptions the writer makes, what values the argument embodies, what rhetorical strategies the writer uses, etc.

Better still we could invite students to analyze, for instance, Queer Nation's founding manifesto, "I hate straights". Instead of asking students to agree or disagree with the article, we could ask them to discuss the article's use of the pronouns "I" and "we". Or we might ask students to conduct research as to why the article's authors adopt the positions that they do. Or we could say to students, "you are a member of Queer Nation. Explain what you hope to accomplish with this manifesto."

The topics I have suggested are no "narrower" or more "restricted" or "less free" than any other topics. Every time we give students an assignment we circumscribe their possible responses. The question is not one of "censorship" then. We can choose how to circumscribe assignments, not whether or not we should circumscribe assignments. If teachers don't want to have to read homophobic papers and don't want gay students to be subjected to such papers, we must frame our assignments in ways that do not invite such responses. It would be disingenuous to ask students if homosexuality is "wrong" and then chastise those students who answer affirmatively.

(6) Discourage straight students from revealing their sexual orientation.

Students should realize that when they announce their heterosexuality to the class or preface a comment with the words, "I am straight but...", they not only (inadvertently perhaps) distance themselves from the topic at hand instead of engaging in it, but they also put gay students in the class in an awkward position. When straight students "come out", gay students are forced to either come out, lie, or remain silent about their homosexuality. This may result in other students assuming that the gay students actually are gay, which reinforces the silence that is already imposed on them in so many spheres of their lives.

If students do identify themselves as heterosexual, we can ask them why they are making this identification public and invite them to discuss the possible consequences of this public identification for the gay students in the class. Straight teachers also should avoid proclaiming their heterosexuality to the class (either explicitly or implicitly by referring to a spouse). In addition to the distancing effects that such a proclamation can have, it has other consequences because of the student-teacher power relationship in the classroom. Sometimes such proclamations are made in good faith, but they have the inevitable effect of making the classroom a comfortable space for straight students and, especially when gay issues or materials are under scrutiny, or enabling some straight students to give a sigh of relief, secure in the knowledge that the teacher is "one of us".

The straight students' comfort is often won at great cost to gay students. Gay students might feel that the teacher is able to discuss gay issues so openly only because she/he does so from the safety of her/his announced heterosexuality, a

luxury that they do not have; they are further denied the possibility of a role model (whether fantasized or real) in the classroom or a point of identification with the teacher. Straight teachers should be willing to run the risk of being thought of as gay by their students.

(7) Gay teachers should come out to their students.

Not every gay student is a member of a visible campus gay group. Some campuses have no such groups. Some students are too afraid to join. Queer students - especially those who are not out - sometimes feel isolated and alienated, even feel like they are the only gay person on campus. Given the disproportionately high suicide rate among gay teenagers and the shocking lack of positive gay role models for young adults, gay teachers owe it to themselves and their gay students to be out in the classroom. Gay students, especially those who are out, need to see real-life, institutionally legitimized gay professionals standing in front of them, teaching them and their heterosexual peers. Given the reach of institutionalized homophobia and the relative invisibility of gays in this society even today, a gay student's or teacher's coming out is not equivalent to a straight student's or teacher's "coming out". In the second case, the power and size of an existing relation of social inequity merely is rehearsed, while in the first case, the voice of the "other", just by proclaiming her/his existence, contests that power structure both by her/his presence and her/his unashamed insistence that this presence be seen, heard, acknowledged, and taken account of.

Appendix 6: "Norm Form"

This section includes the content of a document participants were given for the session on Norms. This paper was prepared by Malou Zilliacus. This paper was used for start discussion on existing norms in societies.

I have a laptop.

I have never been asked when exactly – or how! – I realised my sexual orientation.

I have a European Union passport.

I have never refrained myself from going to a toilet in a public area.

My family used to help me with homework when I was a kid.

I can find "skin coloured" band-aids in my skin colour.

I have nonstop Internet access where I live.

I can access any building without a prior check.

I can go to swim at public swim centres without thinking about which locker room to choose.

I get annoyed when people cannot seem to spell correctly.

I have never been asked if I am a boy or a girl.

I am not afraid of being stopped by the police.

I love to travel.

I have never gotten asked from where in the world I *really* am.

I can pay the rent in time each month.

I can read a campaign brochure handed to me by a political party on the street.

I cannot understand how people can live without music.

I have never had questions about how I really have sex.

I like to participate in international seminars.

Having children or not is only up to me and the person(s) I'd want to raise them with.

I can marry the person of my choice.

I have never had to ask for permission to be free from school on a big religious holiday.

I have a university degree.

I have never reflected about the pronoun people use about me.

Appendix 7: "How to Prevent the Heteronorm in Higher Education?"

This section includes the content of a document participants produced in the session on Heteronormativity in Higher Education and it was compiled by Malou Zilliacus. The document below is a compilation of possible recommendations which should be taken into account when working within higher education system in order to make it more accessible and inclusive to diverse groups of students. Some sections of the document include description of existing situation for students within higher education, which should be taken into account and changed, e.g. 'classroom situations'. Certain sections present the reader with some questions in order to start a discussion on issues connected with specific theme regarding LGBTQ persons within higher education.

Toilets & Dorms:

- Dorms: there are countries with separated dorms & countries with mixed dorms, we want the *possibility of choice* – you can choose male/female
- *Gender-neutral showers that should be lockable*, separated spaces to feel safe
- Dorm authorities are responsible! Not always the same as the universities. Lobby towards the dorms, but with the student union & universities department for dormitories
- It is okay to have separate toilets for male/female/gender neutral, because of e.g. religious believes
- Not only one gender-neutral restroom in the whole university. We would like to invert the ratio as it is now, making the majority gender neutral & the minority gendered. Stop having female/male as a norm!
- Signs: only the gender sign, no dresses/trousers etc.
- If possible, every toilet would be a separate room & then they all could just be "toilets". They can wash their hands/look in the mirror without having to share
- University or the owners of the building are responsible. Approach them through student unions.
- Toilet briefing online – recommendations distribution to welfare students/staff, equality staff

- Be aware that people might be afraid to get labelled

Classroom situations/school environment situations

- Bullying, using wrong pronouns
- General point: these could all be dealt with by having a policy starting Ministry of education, student unions, "we do not tolerate any sort of discrimination" - deal with each situation
- All examples given during lectures are heteronormative/use non-heteronormative teaching material
- The academic closet: few or none LGBTQ staff, assumption that at least all staff is non-LGBTQ, should start with headmasters & teachers creating a safe climate, this will in the end process over to all students
- Respect, not tolerance
- Pronoun education, how to use them correctly
- Realizing that there are huge power structures when it comes to "humour", therefore "jokes" within classroom should be carefully used so that they do not become abusive to other students /teacher/staff
- Certain subjects seen as non-appropriate to certain genders
- Going through course literature & see who is missing, who is represented

Course literature

- "There is no safe space, but there are safer spaces."
- Mainstream LGBTQ issues throughout the course literature. Responsible: administration, student, student unions & teachers (' education)
- Examples in books that are not always heteronormative
- Language used in classrooms: gender—neutral & gender respective
- Teacher training courses, seed has to be planted then! To prevent teacher generations administration & teachers responsible.
- All teachers should be up to date with the gender politics, if there is a new pronoun used in the local area everyone should know
- Not only gender studies department, but it should be part of all subjects
- Feminist movements rewrite history from a women's perspective, now it's

time to rewrite history from an LGBTQ perspective!

- We should make sure that this happens! It affects all of us.

University in a broader context: Forms/Applications/Diplomas

- Own chosen name on your ID, e-mail, diploma, student identity card. Basically, you just have a number. The number would be random, you can't draw any conclusions from it. In any form, if they really need to know who you are - no monitoring of what students they had, so hard to see what these students face -> maybe still do surveys about experiences, practices rather than identities
- What happens with integrity?
- Responsible: the national government, maybe even Europe
- Portfolios to know what people achieved
- Health – LGBTQ awareness, so that people don't become only LGBTQ

Policy documents

- Show the administration there's a need for this: surveys (that are inclusive!) - statistics
- Educate people in these subjects: clubs, coffee evenings etc
- Working closely with those making policies
- Also local NGO's active in the process
- A policy that states that policies should be inclusive, gender could have /blank/ rather than box with female/male/other
- Chosen name instead
- Gender isn't necessary in most forms, discuss the reason to it being there instead of just putting it there
- Discuss the power structures within the university, we want to see balance but we don't want quotas, which are often based on
- Empower people of all gender id to be in leadership positions
- Transparency in all decisions being made
- LGBTQ groups seen as "extra", don't always have an official space – find allies in students/staff through e-mails/phone calls/meetings, showing that there is commitment

- Anti-discrimination policy, find allies & other groups who we could cooperate with
- Make sure that gender markers aren't part of the policies as such

Gender-neutral language

- There aren't gender-neutral pronouns everywhere, we have to invent these words, this grammar, by e.g. translating these from other languages
- In forms & surveys: forming commissions & revise the documents with rep from LGBTQ & feminist groups, to talk about sexism & homo/transphobia & gender blindness in forms
- Internet forms about sexism in student forms & official documents
- Fight for a law that claimed gender-neutral language, then all the universities would have to fulfil it on a larger scale, not having to do individual fighting everywhere
- Gender-neutral language during trainings

Social events

- Parties, sporting, activities, social & communal spaces within the universities
- Safe spaces for everyone, sports accessible to all, all communal spaces safe environments, accessible & safe
- Lobbying & campaigning for non-heteronormative advertising, & in the end see to them actually being –
- No dress-codes, no deals on who you can o with to certain events, no best boy/girls costume, no ladies' drink free
- Sports: how to make this gender-neutral? Hierarchies in teams. Problem: in some sports, men would always be better. At least allowing people to – if they wanted to & could be "good enough", to play in teams of the same level
- Coaches/trainers leading – sexist & homophobic language/methods used
- Representations in sports, not targeting a particular group when advertising
- University level: which sports to provide, which spaces offered to
- Communal/safer spaces, cafeteria not an LGBTQ friendly space – the actual space or about the people in the space? -> Campaign: raise awareness of diversity in the student body

- Images that represent diversity
- Not dividing the spaces in separate ways

Appendix 8: Organisations participating in the study session

Q - queer students	Reykjavik, Iceland
Y-PEER Network Serbia	Belgrade, Serbia
Accept Association	Bucharest, Romania
Metropolitan Community Church / UNC LGBTQ Center	Abilene, the United States of America
Tolerant Youth Association (Tolerantiško jaunimo asociacija)	Vilnius, Lithuania
Trans-Fuzja Foundation: Supporting Transgendered People	Warsaw, Poland
Skeivt Forum (Queer Forum)	Oslo, Norway
Queers	Prague, Czech Republic
HRSI, Human Rights Initiative	Budapest, Hungary
LesBiSchwule Hochschulgruppe – homo, bi, trans*, inter an der uni	Göttingen, Germany
Pink Life LGBTT Solidarity Association	Ankara, Turkey
LGBT Organization Labrys	Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
Institute of European studies and international relations, Faculty of Social and Economical Studies, University of Comenius	Bratislava, Slovakia
UNES / VSS	Bern, Switzerland
Department of HomoBiTrans* issues, University of Vienna Students` Union	Vienna, Lithuania

KPH, Campaign Against Homophobia	Warsaw, Poland
Sin Verguenza (Without Shame)	Barcelona, Spain
United Nations Population Fund, Youth Peer Education Network	Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina
EGN, Estonian Gay Youth	Tallinn, Estonia
Medicinsk Feministisk Front	Göteborg, Sweden
Legebitra, DIH	Belgrade, Serbia
Kaos GL Association	Ankara, Turkey
COLEGA Almería	Almeria
GenderKompetenzZentrum (GKompZ)	Berlin, Germany
IGLYO	Brussels, Belgium
Student Organization of the West University (O.S.U.T.)	Timișoara, Romania
Vilnius University Students' Representation (VU SA)	Vilnius, Lithuania
SFQ	Stockholm, Sweden
National Union of Students LGBT Campaign	London, the United Kingdom
Information Centre "GenderDoc-M"	Chisinau, Moldova
ISO	Utrecht, the Netherlands