



Glossary

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SOGIESC and LGBTIQ concepts

Cisgender. People who are not transgender/trans persons. Cisgender persons' gender identity corresponds with the sex that was assigned to them at birth. Sometimes it might be shortened to "cis person".

Endosex. A term referring to persons whose innate sex characteristics fit the normative medical or social ideals for female and male bodies. Being endosex is opposite to being intersex.

Gender. Refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for women and men.

LGBTIQ. An umbrella term referring to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer persons. The acronym encompasses a diversity of sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, and sex characteristics. People may use different terms to describe themselves.

- **Lesbian.** Commonly understood to refer to a woman whose primary emotional, affectional or sexual attraction is toward other women. It can include people of other genders such as non-binary persons who identify as lesbian and lesbian women in relationships with non-binary persons.
- **Gay.** Commonly understood to refer to a man whose primary emotional, affectional and/or sexual attraction is toward other men. It can include people of other genders such as non-binary persons who identify as gay and gay men in relationships with non-binary persons.
- **Bisexual/Bi.** Refers to a person who is emotionally, affectionally and/or sexually attracted to people of more than one gender. A person may experience this attraction in differing ways and degrees over a lifetime.
- **Transgender.** Refers to individuals who have a gender identity that is different from the gender assigned to them at birth and those persons who wish to portray their gender identity in a different way from the gender assigned at birth.
- **Intersex.** A term referring to persons with innate variations of sex characteristics that differ from societal or medical understandings of typical female or male bodies. These variations may be visible at birth or emerge later in life. Not all persons with

variations of sex characteristics identify as intersex, and individual preferences regarding terminology should be respected.

- **Queer.** A term laden with various meanings and a long history, but currently often denotes persons who do not wish to be identified with reference to traditional notions of gender and sexual orientation and eschew heterosexual, heteronormative and gender-binary categorisations. Occasionally it is used as an umbrella term for everything related to SOGIESC diversity and as a synonym to LGBTIQ people.

Non-binary. An umbrella term that encompasses a variety of gender experiences, including people with a specific gender identity other than man or woman, people who identify as two or more genders (bigender or pan/polygender) and people who do not identify with any gender (agender).

SOGIESC. Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, and Sex Characteristics. An umbrella term encompassing these different dimensions of human diversity.

- **Sexual orientation.** A person's capacity for emotional, affectional and sexual attraction to, and intimate or sexual relationships with, persons of a different gender, the same gender or more than one gender. Sexual orientation is an integral part of a person's identity and should not be confused with gender identity or gender expression.
- **Gender identity.** A person's deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond with the sex assigned at birth. It includes a person's personal sense of their body and gender and is distinct from sexual orientation and gender expression.
- **Gender expression.** The ways in which a person expresses or communicates their gender, intentionally or unintentionally, for example through appearance, clothing, behaviour, speech, mannerisms or other forms of expression. Gender expression may or may not correspond with a person's gender identity or with social expectations associated with gender.
- **Sex characteristics.** A person's physical and biological features relating to sex, including internal and external genitalia, sexual and reproductive anatomy, gonads, chromosomes, hormones and secondary physical characteristics. Variations in sex characteristics are part of human diversity and may be visible at birth or emerge later in life.

Prejudice, discriminatory narratives and discrimination

Discrimination. Any difference in treatment, exclusion, restriction or disadvantage for which there is no objective and reasonable justification and which is based on a protected ground. In the context of this Toolkit, this includes discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or sex characteristics, including where these intersect with other grounds such as national or ethnic origin, migrant or refugee status, religion, disability, age, health status, socio-economic status, relationship status and parenthood status.

Discriminatory narrative. A recurring way of framing or representing a person or group that reinforces stereotypes, prejudice, exclusion or discrimination. Discriminatory narratives may be expressed through rumours, misinformation, disinformation, public discourse, media or other forms of communication.

Disinformation. False, inaccurate or misleading information that is deliberately created or disseminated with the intention of deceiving, manipulating or causing harm.

Hate speech. All forms of expression that incite, promote, spread or justify violence, hatred or discrimination against a person or group, or that denigrate them, on the basis of real or attributed personal characteristics or status, including gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, sex characteristics, national or ethnic origin, migrant or refugee status, religion, disability, age, health status, socio-economic status, relationship status and parenthood status.

Misinformation. False, inaccurate or misleading information that is shared or circulated without necessarily intending to cause harm. It may contribute to the spread or reinforcement of stereotypes, prejudice and discriminatory narratives.

Prejudice. An unfair or unreasonable opinion, attitude or feeling towards a person or group, formed without sufficient knowledge or consideration. Prejudice may be based on stereotypes and can contribute to discriminatory attitudes and behaviour.

Rumour. A story or piece of information that may be true or false and that spreads from person to person, often without reliable evidence or verification. Rumours are not necessarily negative, but they can become harmful when they reinforce stereotypes, prejudice or discriminatory attitudes.

Stereotype. A simplified and generalised belief about the characteristics, attributes or behaviour of members of a particular social group. Stereotypes are not necessarily negative, but they can contribute to prejudice and discrimination when they are applied rigidly or without regard to individual differences.

Under-reporting. A situation in which not all incidents of discrimination, hate speech, hate crime or other forms of violence are reported to the relevant authorities or services

and therefore a certain number of them remains absent from official records. Under-reporting should be taken into account when interpreting available data, as a low number of recorded incidents does not necessarily indicate a low prevalence of discrimination or violence.

Responding to discriminatory narratives

Alternative communication. Communication that moves beyond simply denying or correcting discriminatory claims and instead uses inclusive, evidence-based and values-based messages to broaden understanding, promote empathy and strengthen recognition and belonging.

Alternative narrative. A narrative that offers a different and more inclusive way of understanding an issue, based on shared values, human rights, evidence, lived experiences and recognition of diversity. Rather than simply repeating or directly confronting a discriminatory narrative, alternative narratives seek to broaden the framework through which an issue is understood.

Counter-narrative. A narrative developed specifically to challenge, contest or undermine an existing harmful or discriminatory narrative. Counter-narratives generally respond more directly to an existing narrative, whereas alternative narratives seek to provide a broader and more positive framework for understanding an issue.

Critical thinking. The ability and willingness to question information, assumptions and claims; consider different perspectives; assess evidence and sources; identify bias; and reach informed and reasoned conclusions.

Inclusive narrative. A narrative that recognises diversity, promotes equal dignity and belonging, avoids stereotypes and exclusion, and presents people and communities as full and valued members of society.

Anti-rumours methodology and implementation

Action plan. An operational tool that translates the priorities and objectives of an Anti-rumours Strategy into concrete actions. It specifies what will be done, who will be responsible, when it will be carried out and, where relevant, the resources and expected results. Unlike the Strategy, which sets the overall direction and priorities, the action plan focuses on implementation.

Action. A specific measure or course of action undertaken as part of an Anti-rumours initiative, project or Anti-rumours Strategy.

Activity. A specific activity carried out as part of an action or initiative, such as a workshop, campaign event, training session, dialogue session or communication activity.

Anti-rumours Approach. A systemic approach to preventing and addressing rumours, prejudice, misinformation, disinformation and discriminatory narratives through critical thinking, participation, dialogue, evidence-based communication and the mobilisation of a broad range of actors. It seeks to contribute to changes in perceptions, attitudes and behaviours and, ultimately, to prevent discrimination and foster inclusion.

Anti-rumours Strategy (ARS). A context-specific, long-term process that applies the Anti-rumours Approach through a coherent set of objectives, actors and actions aimed at preventing prejudice and discrimination and promoting more inclusive perceptions, attitudes and behaviours.

Diagnosis. A structured process of gathering and analysing information about the local context, narratives, experiences, actors, challenges, resources and opportunities in order to identify priorities and inform the design of an Anti-rumours Strategy or initiative.

Initiative. An organised set of complementary actions applying the Anti-rumours Approach to address a specific issue, challenge or objective within a particular context.

Governance and actors in an Anti-rumours Strategy

Activation group. The initial driving group that gives impetus to the Anti-rumours Strategy process. It brings together key stakeholders, builds initial commitment and helps mobilise the actors and resources needed to launch the process. Depending on the local context, it may later be integrated into the core team or remain as a broader oversight and support body.

Anti-rumours agent. A trained person who promotes and applies the Anti-rumours Approach within their professional, organisational or community context. Anti-rumours agents may identify and address rumours and discriminatory narratives, facilitate dialogue, promote critical thinking, implement activities and help disseminate inclusive narratives. The training and empowerment of anti-rumour agents is a recognised component of the Council of Europe's Anti-rumours Strategy model.

Anti-rumours community. The broader international community of organisations, institutions, practitioners and other actors connected to the Anti-rumours Approach. It provides a space for knowledge exchange, mutual learning, collaboration and the development of anti-rumours practice across different contexts, with [Anti-rumours Global](#) contributing to its coordination and development.

Anti-rumours network. A broad network of institutions, organisations, professionals, community actors and individuals committed to contributing to the Anti-rumours Strategy. It facilitates collaboration, exchange, participation, dissemination and the development of Anti-rumours initiatives across different sectors and communities. The creation of an Anti-rumours network of local actors is a core element of an Anti-rumours Strategy.

Core team. The group responsible for co-ordinating and overseeing the development and implementation of the Anti-rumours Strategy. It ensures continuity and coherence, co-ordinates actors and resources, monitors progress, supports decision making and helps ensure that actions remain aligned with the strategy's principles, values and objectives.

Stakeholder. An individual, organisation, institution or group that is affected by, has an interest in, can influence, or can contribute to an Anti-rumours Strategy or initiative.

Strategic partner. A stakeholder that has the capacity, resources, influence or expertise to contribute significantly to the development or implementation of an Anti-rumours Strategy or initiative.

Cross-cutting concepts

Intersectionality. An approach that recognises how different aspects of a person's identity and social position may intersect, resulting in distinct experiences of discrimination, disadvantage or privilege. An intersectional approach considers how grounds such as gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, sex characteristics, national or ethnic origin, migrant or refugee status, religion, disability, age, health status, socio-economic status, relationship status and parenthood status may interact.

Lived experience. Knowledge and understanding derived from a person's direct experience of particular identities, situations, inequalities or forms of discrimination. Taking lived experience into account in diagnosis, policy making and decision-making helps ensure that policies and actions reflect the realities, needs and perspectives of those directly affected.

Local context. The specific social, cultural, institutional, political and territorial setting in which an Anti-rumours initiative or strategy is developed and implemented. Understanding the local context is essential for identifying relevant narratives, actors, challenges, opportunities and priorities.

Movable middle. People whose views on a social or public issue are not firmly established and who may be open to reconsidering their perceptions or attitudes in response to credible information, dialogue, personal experiences and values-based narratives. In the Anti-rumours context, the concept is particularly relevant to people who may have limited knowledge or mixed or ambiguous attitudes towards LGBTIQ issues.

Social change. A process through which perceptions, attitudes, behaviours, relationships, practices or institutional arrangements change over time. In the Anti-rumours Approach, social change involves moving beyond isolated communication activities towards longer-term changes that contribute to reducing discrimination and strengthening inclusion.

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