



Section 2

Action design



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Objective

To facilitate the design of initiatives based on the anti-rumours approach that are effective in the field of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and sex characteristics (SOGIESC).

These initiatives should contribute not only to reducing prejudice, stereotypes, misinformation, disinformation and discrimination, but also to strengthening the rights, equal treatment, safety, well-being, meaningful participation and sense of belonging of LGBTIQ people and their families, by promoting more inclusive environments that respect human rights and by fostering coexistence based on equality, diversity and the recognition of all people.

Structure and content

The first part of this section focuses on providing an overview of the range of anti-rumours initiatives that can be carried out, identifying the key elements to bear in mind when designing them (Tool 8). To this end, several tools can be consulted which identify and classify the different types of actions according to the specific objectives we have defined, and the methodologies that can be used.

The remaining tools (9-13) delve deeper into certain elements that are key to the Anti-rumours Approach, such as promoting critical thinking, countering prejudice, disinformation and misinformation through dialogue, creating alternative narratives, and the core content of anti-rumours training. In each section, you will find tools to facilitate the design of activities that incorporate the criteria of the Anti-rumours Approach and ensure their effectiveness through a human rights-based approach, an intersectional perspective and the recognition of the diversity of experiences within the LGBTIQ community.

Key elements for designing anti-rumours initiatives

It is essential to adopt a multidimensional approach that considers the cognitive, emotional, social and structural dimensions underpinning prejudice, inequalities and the spread of exclusionary narratives, as well as their impact on the safety, emotional well-being and sense of belonging of those affected. This implies recognising that discriminatory narratives are not based solely on disinformation and misinformation, but also on social norms, power relations and cultural frameworks that shape perceptions of diversity.

In the SOGIESC context, these actions must also contribute to challenge anti-rights narratives and cis-hetero-endosex normative frameworks that legitimise or normalise situations of exclusion, discrimination or violence against LGBTIQ people, whilst at the same time promoting positive role models, safe spaces for dialogue and a greater critical capacity to identify and reduce hate speech, manipulation, misinformation and disinformation.

→ See Tool 8: Types of anti-rumours initiatives

→ See Tool 9: Steps for designing an anti-rumours initiative

Promoting critical thinking

Critical thinking refers to the ability to analyse and objectively evaluate information, beliefs and perspectives to form a reasoned judgement. It involves questioning assumptions, identifying biases, distinguishing between facts and opinions, recognising fallacies in argumentation, considering alternative viewpoints free from prejudice and stereotypes, and comparing different sources, to understand and assess social complexity using one's own judgement.

Promoting critical thinking is one of the most important strategies of the anti-rumours approach, reinforcing the preventive dimension and seeking a more sustainable change. The aim is to empower people to think independently and make informed and fair judgements that challenge prejudices, misinformation and disinformation relating to diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions and sex characteristics.

As well as analysing the quality of information and identifying biases or fallacies, critical thinking should facilitate an understanding of how inequalities, privileges and processes of exclusion affecting LGBTIQ people are socially constructed.

→ See Tool 10: Key elements for promoting critical thinking

Anti-rumours dialogue

Despite the impact of social media and the media, face-to-face dialogue remains a key tool for identifying and countering discourse based on prejudice, rumours and misinformation and disinformation. This requires individuals to proactively challenge beliefs they encounter when those beliefs rely on stereotypes, generalisations, misinformation or disinformation.

Silence does nothing to reduce the impunity or normalisation of such discourse. However, emotional or angry responses and personal attacks do not contribute to achieve positive results either, and often have counterproductive consequences. To have transformative dialogues, it is essential to be familiar with the most effective communication strategies, which range from active listening and asking questions to effectively countering stereotypes misinformation and disinformation. These tools identify both the main barriers to such transformative dialogues and the best communication strategies we can use.

In the context of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions and sex characteristics, dialogue must combine active listening and critical reflection with a clear human rights-based perspective and respect for the dignity of LGBTIQ people, avoiding approaches that treat fundamental rights as matters of opinion, blurring the distinction between human rights standards and legally recognised rights and personal views.

→ See Tool 11a: The main barriers to interpersonal dialogue

→ See Tool 11b: Strategies for anti-rumours dialogue

Creating alternative narratives

Directly challenging discriminatory, exclusionary or anti-rights narratives targeting LGBTIQ people cannot be the sole or primary strategy for preventing such narratives, raising awareness or fostering critical thinking. Counter-narratives may be necessary in certain contexts and at certain times, but creating new, alternative and more inclusive narratives is a more effective strategy in the medium and long term.

Experience shows that creating alternative, inclusive narratives, which emphasise human rights-based perspectives and more positive and constructive messages, faces greater difficulties in gaining a foothold. Exclusionary narratives possess characteristics that favour their spread and over-representation, particularly on social media. Their appeal to emotions, the simplicity of their messages, and the use of generalisations, prejudices, misinformation, and disinformation give them a power that is not easily countered.

For this reason, it is relevant to identify the key elements that facilitate the creation and dissemination of alternative narratives capable of addressing complexity and promoting critical thinking, based on human rights and also appealing to emotions, factual accuracy and real-life stories. These tools provide the criteria for creating more effective alternative narratives in the field of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions and sex characteristics.

Alternative narratives should help to foster recognition, legitimacy, safety and a sense of belonging, by highlighting the diversity of identities, lived experiences and realities of LGBTIQ people and their families, and promoting positive, everyday role models.

→ See Tool 12: Criteria for creating effective narratives

Basic Anti-rumours training

To design Anti-rumours initiatives aimed at promoting critical thinking, raising awareness or creating effective alternative narratives, it is essential to build on a foundation of basic knowledge that ensures the positive impact of these initiatives.

The **basic Anti-rumours training** is aimed primarily at professionals, practitioners and representatives of organisations and institutions working in areas that can influence social cohesion, inclusion and the narratives present in society. It is particularly relevant for staff from public administrations and services, social and community organisations, LGBTIQ organisations, educational institutions, and professionals working in communication, culture and sport, as well as other local actors interested in understanding and applying the **Anti-rumours Approach** in their own contexts.

In the SOGIESC context, any anti-rumours training must also incorporate basic knowledge of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions and sex characteristics, diverse family forms, human rights, regulatory frameworks, the impact of anti-LGBTIQ discrimination, violence and hate, and an understanding of cis-hetero-endosex normativity as systems that influence perceptions, relationships and social structures.

Goodwill alone or simply repeating the same actions that have been conducted repeatedly for years, will not guarantee positive results. Behind discriminatory and exclusionary narratives lie many

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factors that must be considered. This is why priority should be given to provide training that addresses the cognitive, emotional, social and structural dimensions that influence people's prejudices, perceptions and fears.

Building on a basic understanding of these issues, users of the anti-rumours approach can move forward in developing the necessary skills to design initiatives that consider the various variables and the complexity of reality. Training must ensure that the anti-rumours approach is properly incorporated into the design of effective, safe and inclusive initiatives, capable of promoting sustainable change both in the narratives and in the conditions affecting the well-being and participation of LGBTIQ people.

→ See Tool 13: Structure of a training module

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