



RAINBOW

Rights Against INTolerance: Building an Open-minded World

Spanish Basque Report

Context

Fieldwork

Bibliographic review

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INTRODUCTION

This working document has been drafted as part of the RAINBOW project and aims to raise awareness about scientific policies and theories with regard to a specific subject: stereotypes concerning homophobia in education.

In the first place, we will focus our analysis on identifying the specific nature of homophobic harassment in schools and the stereotypes, views and attitudes that it is based on. In the second place, we will look at projects and experiences that have overcome said discrimination and which also promote the sexual identities of youngsters and adolescents.

To this end, we will use current studies prepared in Spain and the most significant contributions made in the Basque Country. Here, while we have found abundant material on homophobia and sexuality in adolescents, we should point out that there is very little dealing with the teaching staff. One of the most important contributions of this project is that it compensates for said lack of data.

HOMOPHOBIA IN EDUCATION

About harassment at school and homophobic bullying

Generally speaking, we can define **harassment at school** as a kind of physical, verbal and/or relational intimidation that is repeated over time, showing a relationship of power, also within the peer group. This means that harassment at school cannot be regarded as mere provocation, just an isolated action or sporadic event.

A recent study carried out by ISEI/IVEI (2005) was based on a survey of 2,851 students from Primary Education years five at 88 schools in the Basque Autonomous Community and tried to show the size of the problem. Cases of bullying occur in all the years of basic education, with its peak occurring in the sixth year of Primary Education (6.2%), falling gradually in the first four years of Secondary education, and dropping from 5.51% in the first year of Secondary Education to 2.35% in the fourth.

Ignoring classmates or not letting them take part, insulting them, giving them nicknames or talking behind their backs, hitting them, threatening them with weapons (knives, sticks, etc.), sexual harassment, forcing them to do things they don't want to, as well as breaking, stealing or hiding their belongings, these are all things used to describe bullying in the above-mentioned study. Verbal intimidation is the most common (with percentages close to or above 50%), while sexual harassment is one of the least common cases, varying from 0.5% to 4.7%. However, we

need to bear in mind that what is understood by sexual harassment is not identified and that sexist and homophobic insults and aggression do not seem to be included in this category.

In general terms, we can state that we know that part of harassment in educational centres is homophobic bullying, although it is not identified well in the educational community. In addition, bullying has become a major problem in recent years, causing a certain alarm in society as a whole. However, little attention has been paid to homophobia in education in this debate. This makes it necessary to distinguish and try to identify the special characteristic of homophobic harassment at school and its specific forms of discrimination.

According to Raquel Platero (2007, 5), we characterise **homophobic harassment at school** as a specific type of bullying where the aggressors or “bullies” construct or perpetuate unequal power balances by using homophobic, sexism and values associated with heterosexism. It is precisely with this opposition to, negation or rejection of difference that which leads to the creation of patriarchal concepts of masculinity and narrow “gender vigilance” (Villar & Mujica, 2009, 50).

To give just two examples of this kind of mechanism, we must not lose sight of the “**future of homophobic and sexist slander and insults**” that awaits anyone who tries to leave the norm, or that the “**presumption of heterosexuality**” (Generelo, 2008, 37) that is the foundation for building relationships that deepen the invisibility of LGBT teachers, students and families.

For LGBT adolescents who find themselves at a vital time for forming and affirming their identities, all these kinds of discrimination can have an immediate effect: when exposure to verbal, physical and/or relational punishment is permanent, or when the negative images received during the successive stages of socialisation contradict their inner feelings, the desire to be part of the peer group can lead to internalised homophobia, meaning **self-rejection, lack of self-acceptance or self-invisibilisation** of their condition.

In this respect, homophobic bullying has the characteristic of **being difficult to identify both the victim and the bully** (Generelo, 2008, 36). Sometimes LGBT adolescents normalise situations of harassment and feel responsible for the aggression. At other times, the victims conceal the harassment because they don't want to be pointed out, as making the reason for the aggression public can be even more painful than the harassment itself. The aggressors normally hide behind the dominant socially-acceptable norms, making the aggression more subtle and easy to overlook. In the same way, anyone who questions, rejects or faces up to dominant heterosexual norms can become victims of homophobic bullying.

If integration in peer groups being accompanied by close friends are key factors in adolescence and youth, it is important to understand that homophobic bullying is different from other kinds of discrimination (racism, xenophobia, class discrimination, etc.) insofar as the victims usually **lack the support they need from their families and friends...** although this situation may be changing with the new generations:

According to figures taken from the quantitative study prepared by the COGAM (2004) in the Community of Madrid with 869 students, the treatment of homosexuals by friends and families is quite positive: 63% and 50.1% believe that they are treated like everyone else in the two settings respectively. However, although most of those interviewed formally say that gays and lesbians should have the same rights (81.4%), 10.2% think that they shouldn't and 5.6% think that it's not right to be gay or lesbian.

Despite detecting timid changes in the new generations living in Madrid, the writers also conclude that students don't normally detect homophobia in themselves but do so when asked about others. Therefore, as far as social homophobia is concerned, over 89% think that society treats homosexuals more unfairly, and 74.5% believe that they are treated worse than other students at school. Other more recent studies carried out in Madrid and Gran Canaria (Molinuevo, 2008) come to the same conclusion, with statistically similar results.

All these figures indicate that nowadays neither schools nor streets are seen as safe, welcoming or appropriate places for living or experimenting with one's sexual identity openly, especially for LGBT adolescents. To the isolation of the immediate setting, whether imagined or real, we must add **the intimidating threats present in all areas**, locations and times where they live their daily lives, whether in class, the playground, leaving school, in the street or at home, as well as the attitudes of government and the mass media.

Returning to the ISEI/IVEI (2005, 16-21) study on harassment in schools in the Basque Country, the results of the survey show that bullying normally happens in the playground in primary schools (42%) and in class in secondary schools (36%). The responsibility of the school is questioned by the fact that hardly 21% of the students think that the teaching staff intervenes in cases of aggression, compared with the 34.5% who think that friends are the ones who intervene more in cases of harassment, followed by other children in the school (23.3%). Along the same lines, victims of harassment at school talk more with friends (46.5%) or families (60%) than with their teachers (18.4%). Meanwhile, 14.3% of students suffering from harassment don't say anything to anyone. All the above means that it is likely that these general figures will shoot up when we talk about homophobic harassment.

In this respect, one key idea that must be reinforced is that, with bullying in general and homophobic bullying in particular, **the whole educational community is affected**. As the psychologist Ana Belén Gómez says, "homophobia locks people into rigid, static gender roles that reduce creativity and the capacity of expression" (Generolo & Pichardo, 2005, 6). Not only this. Homophobia and sexism also impoverish the affective-sexual relationships between adults (teaching staff, school staff, families, etc.), considerably hinder tolerance and coexistence in educational centres and perpetuate historical forms of discrimination that affect society as a whole.

Distinguishing and identifying this kind of discrimination may well be a good way of starting to bring this reality to light and beginning to overcome it. Looking at specific experiences and the potential and difficulties present in the educational community is, in this sense, one of the most

urgent and necessary tasks.

Homophobic stereotypes, attitudes and views in the classroom

Different studies looking at homophobia in education have no doubt in stating that a lack of understanding and invisibility are two of the main causes of the creation and maintenance of homophobic stereotypes. Paradoxically, these factors are perpetuated at a time when children are faced with over-mediatised worlds that perpetually offer a large amount of images, sounds and content dealing with diverse and often distorted realities. As we will see below, everyone underlines the invisibility and lack of understanding of LGBT individuals and groups.

On the one hand, invisibility and lack of understanding are a result of **the taboos that exist in society**, the silence of adults and the fact that they are afraid to deal with these subjects after long years of sexual repression during the dictatorship, as well as the lack of affective-sexual education in the current system of education, leading one to understand that it isn't important enough to be taught and learnt about in the classroom.

Here, we find little help when we see the lack of definition of something that is so complex and difficult to name. For example, The Royal Academy of the Language states that sexuality is "(the) sexual appetite, (the) tendency towards carnal pleasure", as if it were something obsessive. It describes heterosexuality just as "(the) sexual inclination towards the opposite sex, but homosexuality is "(the) inclination towards an erotic relationship with individuals of the same sex", meaning something relating to attraction and arousal, something bordering on the perverse.

However, in contrast to the social and institutional silence on sexuality in general and homosexuality in particular, students are faced with **brimming with references to sex**. This infinite supply of (dis)information is associated with pornography, consumerism and view of homosexuality that has little to do with the daily lives of LGBT individuals (Platero, 2007,12)

Television, advertising and Internet are becoming significant socialising agents meaning that LGBT visibility runs the risk of becoming an eminently televised and/or technologised reality. In addition, this media is usually a source of new discriminations, as they generally lack points of reference for lesbians, bisexuals or transsexuals. Anyway, we should point out they images they offer and/or promote regarding these public LGBT characters are usually associated with banality, party lifestyles, show-business, shameless behaviour, transgression, etc.

An example of the above is that people who have excelled in different areas and who students identify as homosexuals - such as the poet Federico Garcia Lorca, the Macedonian king Alexander the Great, or the multifaceted Leonardo da Vinci, have been heard of because movies have been made about them and not because they have been talked about at school (Molinuevo, 2008, 32-33)

Some of these images are clearly homophobic and promote dislike and rejection, many others

may be homophobic, meaning that they contain attributes that are considered positive by society. However, we mustn't lose sight of the fact that both homophobia and homophilia are a result of simplifications and prejudices regarding the broad LGBT group, and that some of them are recreated and maintained in the classroom:

TABLE 1. Stereotypes, views and attitudes about LGBT among students

Use of language	Use of the third person, indicating that they do not assume homophobic opinions and attitudes as theirs.	"it's society", "they're others"
	Insults or gestures of rejection of behaviour they consider not to be very masculine or feminine. Above all, expressions relating to an aversion to gay mannerisms.	"queer", "queen", "poof", "butch", "homo", "dyke" "he's effeminate"
Essentialisation or social construction	Use of expressions of a religious nature.	"immoral", "unnatural"
	Understanding that it is older people who don't understand other, different kinds of relationships and that it's a sign of being "modern" when you do.	"are they born or are they made?", "deviants"
Categorisation of gender and idealisation	Allocation of male roles to lesbians and feminine roles to gays.	"butch" "effeminate"
	Allocation of jobs and professions.	"hairdressers", "artists"
	Allocation of differential attributes.	"gossips", "sensitive", "they look after themselves more"
Stigmatisation and fear of contagion	See LGBT individuals solely as a function of their sexual desire or accuse them of the same.	"promiscuous", "dissolute", "morbid"
	See LGBT individuals as living on the edge of society and associated with illnesses that are stigmatised.	"with IVH/AIDS", "irresponsible", "perverse"
	Fear of being stigmatised as LGBT is they defend or show interest in LGBT	"don't think that I'm one"
Reclusion or voluntary openness	State that LGBT individuals are the ones who have to defend each other, give them the responsibility for improving their situation or confining them in a private area.	"they shouldn't be so blatant" "it's a personal subject and shouldn't be talked about"

Own work. Sources: COGAM (2004), INJUVE (2011), Generelo (2008), Molinuevo (2008)

Firstly, we should highlight the fact that students often use **sexist and homophobic insults** without knowing exactly what they mean, or the effect they can have. Educational centres often have a climate that accepts verbal insults and aggressions, meaning that we need to be aware that this "future of insults" is a "painful, paralysing aggression that generates anguish in those adolescents that know they are different to the sexual norm" (Generelo, 2008, 21).

When we look at the content of the insults, we see that the main insults against male students are aimed at their sexual orientation or "manliness", while the sexual freedom of females is penalised. According to Generelo (2008, 47), "insults are used to maintain the sexual hierarchy in which men have to maintain their privileged position, confronting their inferiors, what is feminine, while women of course have to accept this situation without changing it".

Secondly, the above-mentioned sexual hierarchies can also be seen in the **stigmatisation of LGBT individuals**. A paper given by Eñaut Otazo in June 2011 contains several examples. To be

specific, a lesbophobic viewpoint or aversion to lesbians underlines the error and peripheral nature of their sexual orientation. Expressions such as “they don’t know what’s good for them” or “they’ve never met a real man” show this clearly. Meanwhile, biphobia or the rejection of bisexuals is shown by regarding them as “super-sexual” or promiscuous... putting it vulgarly, “they do it every way”, “they love sex”. Finally, transphobia or an aversion to transexuality is normally calls them “false” or that “they’re pretending”.

In this case, we should **distinguish LGBT-phobia and LGBT-philía among boys and girls**, as the responses and reactions of male and female students usually differ widely:

Based on figures taken from a study carried out in Coslada (Madrid) and San Bartolomé de Tirajana (Gran Canaria) of 4.643 secondary students aged from 11 to 19s, the interpretation of Belén Molinuevo is clear and emphatic: “boys show less rejection to female homosexuality and are less put off by it than masculine homosexuality because, as one of them said, “seeing two lesbians gets me going”. The sexuality of women continues to be constructed for masculine pleasure, as an object of desire of the heterosexual male (...). Pornography, with the constant presence of images of lesbian relationships, has a significant influence on adolescents” (Molinuevo, 2008, 31). The results of the study show that these perceptions increase with the age of the boys and under the influence of the media.

With regard to homophobia among girls, all the studies we have consulted mention that girl students are more tolerant of sexual diversity. However, the COGAM study qualifies this thesis, which is already a myth: while the girls see themselves as more tolerant, open and protective of gays, those interviewed show less respect towards lesbians (Generelo & Pichardo, 2004, 27). At first glance, their answer seem less direct or aggressive than those of the boys, but we see that their acceptance of male homosexuality is marked by the allocation of positive attributes based on rigid concepts of femininity. This means that girl students tend to idealise gays by regarding them as being gossips, liking fashion, looking after their bodies, etc.

In addition, a third factor that should be underlined regarding the stereotypes, views and attitudes of the students is related to discourse. They can sustain a “**politically correct**” discourse on homosexuality and LGBT rights, and then show homophobic attitudes immediately afterwards. Several studies have also noted contradictions between their “hypothetical” opinions and their “real” attitudes. Finally, the percentage variations appearing when they are asked three things are highly significant: if they have seen third parties suffering aggression, if they admit to having carried out this aggression, and if they admit that they themselves have suffered homophobic aggression. We hardly need to say that these percentages fall significantly when they talk about their own acts or thoughts.

In this sense, the Spanish government Department of Youth Affairs states that, underlying certain opinions on sexual diversity expressed by young people, we find what has been called “**liberal homophobia**”, this being a type of homophobic attitude “that may permit the expression or homosexuality in private but never in public. On this basis, they say that homosexuals shouldn’t talk about their homosexuality in public, but keep it to themselves (INJUVE, 2011, 4).

Making the LGBT group responsible for whether it is closed or open to society leads in the same direction.

The isolation and exclusion of what is different can also be caused by **fear of being stigmatised**. If everyone who showed interest in a minority sexual orientation were suspected of being homosexual, they would very probably stop showing a favourable attitude in public. However, if the contagion effect is seen as positive, demonstrations of kindness and sympathy might increase in public. In this case, homophilia is seen as “being with the cool guys” or “being cool”, which can be confused with a passing fad... or with a limited concept of what “being modern” means in juxtaposition with “traditional”, “conservative”, or religion.

All these stereotypes and the attitudes that go with them can be transgressive and innovative, as well as sources of exclusion, ridicule and rejection. However, they correspond to students at a specific time and in a specific place. We know little or nothing about the opinions of teachers, school managers and the counselling team.

This project will not only explain more about the opinions of this large group, but will also leave the classrooms to look at other times and spaces where this kind of discrimination occurs, and where the keys to overcoming them emerge. In this sense, as we will explain below, teaching sexual diversity in all fields of education, society and government is a comprehensive proposal designed to overcome inequalities and promote affective-sexual diversity.

EDUCATING FOR SEXUAL DIVERSITY

Dealing with affective-sexual identity in schools

A glance at the Basque educational system highlights the current shortcomings in dealing with all kinds of homophobic stereotypes and attitudes and preventing bullying at school: sexual diversity and gender are taught from the age of 12 onwards. They are not part of the primary school curriculum and the secondary education colleges have the “Uhin-bare” program, which contains a didactic unit dealing with homosexuality and lesbianism but not transsexuality.

At times, the LGBT groups themselves have offered educational centres workshops dealing with the subjects: In 2003, Aldarte set up the social-educational project entitled “Sexual Diversity and New Families: giza-hezitzaile proiektua” aimed at students from 6 to 12 years of age; Gehitu offers teaching staff and students in the four years of secondary education materials to combat LGBT-phobia; the EHGAM movement was one of the pioneers, setting up a didactic unit in 1985-86, and offers workshops entitled “The faces of homophobia”. On other occasions, courses have been offered by different Basque Government departments, such as the Berritzegunes, Town Halls and the Osakidetza Basque Health Service.

In addition, one of the most recent measures taken by the Spanish parliament was to approve the inclusion of the subject called “education for citizenship” (Royal Decree 2006), which aims to deal with a lot of topics, including content on affective-sexual and family diversity. However, we should point out that this subject is only included in Secondary Education, although it has been designed so that it can be begun in the last year of Primary Education. On the contrary, subjects such as religion are part of the curriculum for both primary and secondary education and all centres are obliged to offer it, at least as an option.

As a result of all the above, dealing with affective and sexual diversity of all kinds both clearly and explicitly, making it a natural thing to teach at school, is one of the first and most important steps that needs to be taken by the educational community. Putting it another way, we need to recognise that sexual orientation, gender identity, emotional education, etc. are important and necessary topics that should be taught and studied in the classroom.

To do so, positive references to affective diversity have to be systematically included in the Official Curriculum for all years, so as to learn in depth and not just skim the surface, linking it to the complex personal processes in which students may be immersed, integrating it with the overall body of knowledge taught by the education system (Villar & Mujica, 2009, 60). Including it the Official Curriculum also implies being able to work on this material more systematically. In this way, affective-sexual education in educational centres would largely stop depending, on the good will of a few private initiatives or on the spontaneity of the more involved teachers.

However, just being included in the Official Curriculum is not enough and another series of complementary measures need to be taken to overcome harassment and obtain equal treatment for varied affective-sexual lifestyles:

- Touching on the **content dealing with the multiple facets** in which sexuality is manifested or, to put it another way, not reducing sexuality to reproduction, analysis of the body and the genitals, etc. but facilitating and/or experiencing other models of masculinity and femininity, etc.
- Favouring the **development of attitudes and skills** aimed at boosting self-esteem and which see affective-sexual diversity as something good, interesting and important to defend. In the same way, avoid producing orientations that consider gender roles.
- Agreeing on “**good practice guides**” or “**action plans**” to reinforce the school as somewhere teachers, students and other staff can put what they think, feel and want in the affective-sexual field into practice, as well as taking measures against any intolerance, abuse or exclusion directed at the students, teachers and other staff.
- Offering **innovative and attractive teaching materials** to the educational community as a whole (teachers, management, support staff, students, and families), taking into account age, characteristics of the group, sociocultural and language contexts, etc.

Towards social-educational action in the school environment

The second subject we would like to raise is the growing social openness and diversification of attitudes that characterise contemporary societies, as well as the importance they place on education and peaceful coexistence. In this respect, we could say that openness, visibility and the degree to which people know members of the LGBT collective does not necessarily mean greater respect for diversity.

In general terms, we can still talk about **correspondence between the degree of to which people know homosexual individuals and the acceptance of homosexuality**. Guideline figures taken from the COGAM study (2004) show that boys and girls who say that they know homosexual individuals rate their feeling of comfort higher (31.8% say that they are very comfortable and 24.2% quite comfortable) higher than those who say they do not know any homosexual individuals (17.4% say that they are very comfortable and 20.7% quite comfortable).

However, the same study points out that there is a slight increase in **negative attitude when they are closer to a homosexual individual** than a friend or family member. These figures may reflect strong emotional homophobia “based on informed decision” (Generelo & Pichardo, 2004, 60), as students who do know homosexual individuals score higher for the extreme positions: 55% agree strongly with public displays of affection and 10% disagree strongly, while the boys and girls who say they don’t know any homosexuals post mid-table scores (ibidem, 65)

These figures lead the authors to point out the following: while social openness means that more and more LGBT adolescents live their sexuality openly, the silence regarding these realities in the educational system can lead to an increase in homophobic harassment in secondary education centres (Generelo & Pichardo, 2004, 5). If this is the case – and we believe that it is largely true – we should add another idea to our general hypothesis: is changes in the educational system are not accompanied by social openness and recognition of different identities, it is more than likely that LGBT youths and adolescents will continue to be discriminated against outside school and when they have finished their formal education.

Both factors indicate the need to take the right measures to manage diversity as a whole. It is obvious that these measures need to go much further than mere formal tolerance. Indeed, **social-educational action in the environment** focuses on the comprehensive transformation of both the educational centre and its setting (Koheslan, 2008, 97). To do this, we assume that everyone inhabiting a specific environment can be both teachers and learners, as both functions are exercised at the same time when they interact. Therefore, schools and secondary education centres stop being the sole educational agents. More than this, the education of young people includes school time, family time, free time, and ever more frequently, media or technology time. Each time has its own space and social-educational action should promote the “educational use” of the different spaces. Finally, educational action taken by social agents should be based on educational associationism and participation.

Taking into account the different social-educational times and spaces (street, school, home,

social networks, etc.), the multiple social-educational agents who play roles in the environment and their relationships (educators and social educators, free time monitors, family, associationists, etc.) and the resources needed may well guarantee that we can overcome discrimination and enjoy peaceful coexistence in diversity. The following are some of the measures that should be taken to this end:

- **Increasing quality time and space**, where one can express one's emotions and concerns, transmit and share orientations, experiences and feelings. This means moving on from settings lacking in confidence to settings where all doubts about the acceptance of LGBT individuals are dispelled.
- **Extending the support network**, particularly the support of local points of reference (peer group, family, teachers) and the presence of public points of reference (historical, literary, TV personalities, etc.), actively involving and coordinating the different social-educational agents, among which we should mention government, formal and non-formal educational centres, families, the media, free-time initiatives, LGBT associations and other cultural, sports, etc. associations.
- Having overcome the presumption of heterosexuality, be especially aware of those minors who break gender roles and, where necessary, **accompany and share situations without replacing the adolescent**.
- **Providing all necessary resources**, subsidising initiative and activities that promote diversity and can be extended to all kinds of youngsters and adolescents, as well as funding programmes that directly connect with LGBT youngsters and adolescents, creating materials aimed at satisfying the need for training and advising the different agents, favouring all-embracing, permanent awareness and training initiatives, promoting analysis of and research into these realities, etc.

In relation to all the changes in the environment, it is vital to make **special mention of the LGBT associations**. They have long experience of creating high-quality, welcoming spaces, especially when LGBT adolescents have suffered from uncertainty, loneliness and isolation in their immediate environment, or when the support of family and friends has not been enough. The long experience of LGBT associations includes making the general public and institutions aware of many initiatives, proposals and demands. In the case in question, the LGBT associations have shown special dedication and concern as regards the official and unofficial educational systems, offering a wide range of talks, workshops, courses, conferences and seminars aimed at covering training needs and raising awareness, as well as providing strategies, tools and resources to deal with affective-sexual diversity and be able to live it more openly.

New legal and institutional frameworks that give equal rights¹

Giving equal rights to the LGBT collective has arrived late and is still incomplete. However, the LGBT movement has had many legal victories in this field. To evaluate them properly, we need to go back to the early years of Franco's dictatorship and look at the most significant legal and institutional advances made in the last decade and their shortcomings.

With regard to the persecution of homosexuals, the Spanish **Law on criminals and idlers** was especially brutal and has left an indelible memory. It dates back to 1933, when measures were taken to banish, control and imprison those who were regarded as anti-social and/or dangerous (tramps, nomads, scoundrels, pimps, etc.). Franco's regime modified the law in 1954 to include homosexuals. The measures to be taken were also modified: as well as imprisonment in "work camps" and "penal farms", preventing them from living in certain areas, obliging them to declare where they were living and being "supervised by the authorities", Article 6 expressly states that "homosexuals to whom this safety measure applies should be put in special institutions, completely separate from the others".

In 1970, this Law was replaced by another: the **Law on dangerousness and social rehabilitation**. Together with the **Law on public scandal**, the law cracked down on many things, including selling pornography, selling and consuming drugs, these being two areas used to entrap homosexuals for decades. The Law also included sentences of up to five years in prisons or psychiatric institutions until the prisoners were "rehabilitated".

Only in 1979 were several articles removed from the Law on dangerousness and social rehabilitation, including those referring to "homosexual acts". The Law on public scandal was finally abolished in 1989, while the Law on dangerousness and social rehabilitation was not fully abolished until November 23rd 1995.

Together with the struggle of LGBT individuals and groups to achieve the above, recent years have seen the appearance of a whole range of legal and institutional advances that are progressively putting the rights of everyone on the same footing. Discussions prior to these reforms have not been free of rejection by the Catholic Church and conservative political parties, but have led to these subjects being included in the social agenda.

To be exact, there are four measures on which the new model of rights for the LGBT collective in the Basque Country are based, two institutional initiatives and two laws that have substantially modified the legal framework:

- Law 2/2003, dated May 7th, enacted by the Basque Parliament, **regulating de facto partnerships**. This law, as well as recognising the legal status of homosexual couples registering as such, allows joint adoption by couples made up of two individuals of the same

1 . This sub-section is based in the notes and suggestions made by María Luisa Aguirreche from the Ararteko (Herriaren defendatzailea/ Basque Ombudsman), who coordinates the following areas: Families, Equality and Physical Integration of Women, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transsexual Individuals.

sex, with equal rights and obligations as couples made up of two individuals of different sex and couples joined in matrimony. It also accepts that the adopted or biological child of one of the members of the partnership has the right to be adopted by the other member.

- Law 13/2005, dated July 1st, approved by the Spanish Congress, modifies Civil Law as regards **the right to contract marriage**. This law allows marriages between individuals of the same or different sex, with completely equal rights and obligations, whatever their composition may be. On the basis of this modification of Civil Law, the effects of marriage, which are fully maintained regarding the configuration the institution is designed for, are the same for all purposes independently of the gender of the contracting parties, including both those referring to social security rights and provisions and the possibility of taking part in adoption procedures. The Law also changes the terminology of certain articles in Civil Law: references to husband and wife have been replaced by spouses or partners, to be legally accepted as someone married to someone else, independently of whether they are of the same or different sex.
- On February 4th 2000, the Basque Parliament approved a Motion recommending that the Basque Government promote an Information, Advice and Consultancy Service for lesbians and gays, their families and friends, in collaboration with Regional Governments and the main Town Councils in the Basque Country. 2002 saw the setting up of the **Gay, Lesbian and Transsexual Help Centre**, known as Berdindu! (“Equal!”), part of the Family and Community Policy Section of the Department of Employment and Social Affairs.
- In 2010, the Basque Health Service recognised the right to **comprehensive health care of transsexual individuals**, including the sex reassignment surgery that was not available on the national health but is now carried out by a specially created unit at Cruces Hospital in Bizkaia.

The above-mentioned legal and institutional reforms are a significant advance in providing equal rights and obligations for the LGBT collective. However, now that a reasonable time has passed, the Basque Ombudsman points out that **there are certain deficiencies and gaps in the application of said reforms**, especially regarding the registration of legal sex changes and children of homosexual couples. As well as making administrative adjustments to ensure that they are applied fully, the administration must be rid of all vestiges of past hindrances – even more so when this is a mere formality – that implicitly or explicitly exclude or contradict this legal reality.

With regard to changes in the Basque system, new services such as Berdindu! generally need a higher profile. With medical care and provisions, we also need to satisfy the demands of different transsexual groups to offer a comprehensive, high-quality service. Other recommendations in the educational field refer to the need to ensure that transgender and transsexual students are called by the name corresponding to their desired gender.

All in all, as stated by the Ombudsman, for progress in extending social awareness and acceptance to be favourable to the rights of homosexuals and transsexuals, an education aware of this reality must be consciously developed.

Finally, one of the severest criticisms of all these legal and administrative reforms comes from the Basque LGBT associations, who warn of the risk of heterosexualising and institutionalising the demands of the collective. Beyond providing equal rights and obligations that could be seen as heterosexist and systemic, they insist on the importance of eradicating the patriarchal system with its heterosexist and homophobic values and expressions.

INTRODUCTION (2nd part)

This fieldwork forms part of the Rainbow Project and has two aims: firstly, to raise awareness of the discourse and attitudes of educators as regards the LGBT community and their reality and secondly, to understand how teaching staff propose to deal with emotional-sexual diversity in educational institutions.

It also aims to share the diagnosis made of bullying and homophobia in education and gather contributions made by those agencies with a significant impact on minors, while analysing the best ways to make schools more aware of these problems and looking for alliances to implement them.

In order to do so, we will present the main conclusions drawn from ten in-depth interviews with counsellors, headmistresses, teachers, 3 focus groups, made up of representatives from different bodies associated with parent-teacher associations (PTA), LGBT associations, educational, social and political groups and bodies of all kinds, as well as different representatives of the Basque public education administration.

State and private/state-subsidized primary and secondary schools (Primary Education and Compulsory Secondary Education) in urban, semi-urban and rural environments in three Basque provinces (Araba, Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa), as well as different representatives of LGBT groups, student assemblies, sexology and affective sex education organisations... from all over the region.

However, we should point out that in most cases, it was the schools themselves that selected those to be interviewed, or the most interested members of the teaching staff were those who agreed to the interview. We understand that this may have had a direct impact on the results presented below, especially on the remarkable involvement and interest of the professionals interviewed, critiques of the educational system and the perceptions and discourses which can be drawn from their restrained words.

PERCEPTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND DISCOURSES ON LGTB

PEOPLE AMONG TEACHING STAFF

Stereotypes, commonplaces and images

Taking the presumption of heterosexuality in the education community as a starting point, the teachers discussed the possible sexual orientation of students who differ from the norm. These are some of the common places most often heard among the people interviewed:

- **Ascribing ways of being:** showing feelings or emotions in public (holding hands or other displays of affection); tendency to join or play with the girls; being affectionate or happy, talking more, etc.
- **Ascribing interests:** girls that like football or boys that play with skipping ropes or dolls.
- **Ascribing aesthetic and/or artistic taste:** liking or engaging in theatre, dance, music and/or reading; aesthetic preference for certain types of clothes (dresses, scarves, bracelets or other decorative objects; pink; girls that dress like footballers); make-up.
- **Categorizing based on forms of expression:** vocal traits (pronunciation, tone, etc.), ways of walking, hand movements, small gestures, etc.

It is not possible to overlook the fact that it is the *sum of LGBT stereotypes which sparks suspicion of a possible different sexual orientation*, and not the development or existence of a specific distinguishing trait, interest or taste.

Otherwise, it should be highlighted that we did not notice any stereotypes which point to homosexuality as something pathological or linked to illness, 'biology', 'medicine', something 'anti-natural' or something 'anti-moral'.

Attitudes and commitment

With regard to the reality of LGBT people at educational institutions, in principle, everything seems to be operating under *normal circumstances*: in general, neither favourable nor 'extreme' opposing reactions are noticed. *Emotional-sexual diversity is dealt with as something exceptional*, which results in attitudes and discourses in keeping with the universal presumption of heterosexuality, 'letting it go', taking action 'when the problem appears', 'not dealing with it unless it comes up'.

These attitudes are supported and reinforced by a supposed **respect for their private life**:. An arbitrary separation between public and private locates the reality of LGBT people in the *world of the private* and the intimate.

Among teachers, they know that some people's experience of their homosexuality is more or less 'discrete' or even 'more hidden'. They acknowledge that they may feel uncomfortable and understand that they do not 'bare themselves' before the students. Other times they take the

position or duty they perform into account in hiding their orientation. All of these opinions serve to show **understanding with regard to their invisibility** and indicate that 'they don't have to offer any further explanation' (E-10) regarding their sexual identity. Being a good colleague and professional is what they formally value.

However, this attitude of supposed respect for personal decisions sometimes gets confused with more cautious positions which they **advocate because they do not become overly-visible**, what has come to be called '*plumofobia*' (rejection of campiness or effeminacy in gays).

Along the same lines, more extreme opinions advocate **waiting for them to define their sexual identity**. This view of the seclusion or voluntary openness of LGBT people tends to hold that it is in their hands to reveal themselves or not, that it is their responsibility to improve their situation or not, or that it is preferable for them to defend each other, while the heterosexuals who express these attitudes remain comfortably passive.

Lastly, **normality can also be taken as a sign of naturalness**, as in those attitudes and discourses which advocate a natural situation or handling of these realities at schools, 'not as strict or prejudiced as in many other places outside education' (E-4), and a less restrained use of words and expressions, 'without being such purists' (E-4).

A good example of what has been said above is the generally passive attitude with regard to the insults normally exchanged between students. The teachers assess to scope of the insult: who said it to whom and how they said it, and if they said it with the intention of humiliating or not. And based on this **arbitrary assessment**, they draw attention to it, make a note of it or simply ignore it.

Uses of verbal language, non-verbal language ... and silence

In general, we can say that the teachers do not use or even take care not to use pejorative homophobic or sexist terms. However, when they refer to LGBT people, **they do not name them specifically, precisely or explicitly**. Instead, they mention people who have tastes and interests which are 'not normal', 'different', 'strange', 'a different style', 'something', or 'has that look', 'has a penchant for', etc.

What was at first described as normal or natural begins to be described as taboo. In fact, there is a certain consensus when it comes to deciding that LGBT sexuality is taboo in schools. And these taboos also appear in the conversations we had with these education professionals: occasionally, the statements were simple accompanied by silence, or they did not finish their sentence; they did not name or avoid certain terms or concepts. etc. This silence or **non-use of the language** is particularly striking because it suggests that words like 'gay' and 'lesbian' cause fear or are associated with something negative, bad, stereotypical. They still think they are insults when they are not.

Thirdly, we should mention the use of **non-verbal language**, gestures of rejection or distancing, disapproving or surprised facial expressions, etc. All of these are generally expressions of a reality which is not ultimately lived openly or socially accepted.

Views of students

In this sub-section, we will focus on education professionals' views on the images, attitudes, and language of students regarding LGBT people. All of these opinions are relevant as they reveal new stereotypes and attitudes of the teachers themselves, or reinforce those we have just mentioned.

The teachers' discourse ranges from seeing childhood as asexual to a childhood that experiences things naturally, even 'innocently' ('they are not aware'); and from an indecisive or 'confused' adolescence to an adolescence which is more open and tolerant than adults (family members, teachers, etc.).

The first aspect of the discourse contains the idea that the students are not mature enough and that this **temporary identity confusion will resolve itself in time**, particularly when they become sexually active.

The second aspect of the discourse **confuses homophobia with tradition and the openness of youth to modernity**. In this case, more tolerant conceptions are generally confused with something innate in children.

With regard to attitudes towards sexuality, taking the sex of the students into account, it is interesting to note that some teachers **believe that boys are more open than girls**: the former see it as something good and the latter as something dirty.

Despite everything, the people interviewed state that the students are curious about and interested in subjects related to emotional-sexual identity. Strangely enough, we have collected various statements that indicate that the majority of the students are **unfamiliar with or do not know what heterosexuality is**, but they do have an idea of what homosexuality might mean.

In addition to the fact that there is a great deal of ignorance in all cases, the teachers indicate that there are **obvious contradictions** between what the students say and what they do: apparent displays of acceptance and tolerance towards homosexuality do not prevent there immediately being homophobic aggression or insults, and above all, sexist behaviours with rigid models of masculinity and femininity assumed by the boys and accepted by the girls.

Representations and ideas of bullying

The people interviewed identify bullying, measure the degree of harassment, evaluate its repercussions on the victim and define the steps to take in very different ways. All of these representations and actions in cases of harassment shed more light on the stereotypes they have regarding LGBT people and realities.

Sometimes they believe that being the victim of bullying is generally due to **being 'different'**, and specifically, showing physical, psychological or emotional weakness (for example, shyness); having a physical trait which stands out ('fat', 'big tits', 'midget', 'big-nose', 'ugly', etc.); having a particular look (wearing glasses, etc.); or gesturing or speaking in certain ways. As cause and effect, this may be due to having difficulty learning, relating to others, integrating, etc.

Other times bullying is identified as due to **demonstrations of strength** by the victim which, in short, attract attention, bother and/or provoke the other students. When it is believed that the person being harassed is also an attacker, it is more difficult to identify cases of bullying and distinguish cases of abuse from harassment: generally they are very well integrated into their own class ('I'm well accepted', 'I'm one of the cool kids', they treat me 'like a king', E-3), but the attacks or abuse come from older children in higher years.

In addition, we have also seen certain conditions and situations where, even if we discount gender roles, it is thought that **there is no bullying**: skill in sports is viewed positively (girls who they like and know how to play football), getting get marks or being intelligent, showing a strong personality (being modest or reserved or sure of themselves), having their own interests. Some of the teachers believe that students who openly show their (homo)sexual orientation are 'brave', and with **high self-esteem** and the **support of their family**, will be successful.

Cases of bullying may be more frequent during adolescence than at other stages of life: bullying increases for people who have been discriminated against during their entire schooling; or people who had previously been accepted by their peer group and are separated from certain spaces or conversations. In the face of these situations, some of the teachers believe that it is actually the LGBT students who 'make themselves invisible (...) to survive the winter, until a more pleasant spring flowers' (E-1).

As adolescence is also a critical period for bullying, there is unanimous agreement in indicating that prevention must take place much earlier.

They are not unaware that school can become a hostile or violent environment and 'those who are cool and say "don't look at me like that" don't get picked on any more' (E-6). **Relationships and codes among peers are not always understood** by adults and therefore, adults should not always intervene in children's affairs. They believe that the risk of misinterpreting a simple quarrel between equals with cases of bullying can have incalculable negative consequences, above all, when terrified fathers and mothers always on the lookout for bullying interfere without any real reason. Insults and aggression have always been a part of school and will continue to be so, although now with greater media attention and societal alarm.

One idea stands out in the background: that adolescent codes cannot be interpreted using adult parameters and that it is necessary to take into account the context in which these relationships take place. Thus the ineffectiveness of certain protocols which are too general and systematic (the coexistence protocol of the Basque government is mentioned); they do not take account of the operation of schools and their deficiencies; they do not go into the subject in detail or specify the type of harassment, the victim and aggressors, families and their social environment, etc.

EDUCATION IN EMOTIONAL SEXUAL DIVERSITY. DIFFICULTIES AND POTENTIAL

The duties of education

The education community and its duties have changed significantly in recent years. Sometimes the changes are caused by the school itself and other times it is changes in society which have a great impact on educational duties and agendas of schools.

These are some of the most noteworthy changes mentioned with regard to the subject under discussion:

- Greater diversity of family types.
- Increased immigration from outside the European community.
- Greater value placed on the body and beauty.
- The influence of the media and new technologies .
- Regression with regard to gender roles,.

Issues such as family diversity and sexuality are important for the people interviewed, but in all cases **homophobia and the reality of LGBT people are not priority issues.**

In this regard, it is unanimously agreed that schools are already **overwhelmed with educational duties** and that they lack material, time and human resources.

Appears to be a need to increase and/or strengthen other socio-educational agencies and agents to share these duties with. In this regard, we look to the **family as the first—and most important—socializing agent.** We would like to highlight two cases in which **heteronormativity makes relations between school and families more difficult:**

The first case is schools with a high percentage of migrant students and/or students from diverse backgrounds (E-4 and E-6), where stereotypes and generalizations get confused and are reinforced: they believe that have other immediate interests and other more urgent needs.

The second case is schools located in rural or semi-rural environments (E-10), where the city

authorities, church and population exercise more pressure. The position of the school is clear with regard to emotional-sexual diversity: within the school, yes, but it should not extend beyond the walls. Again we find the very widespread idea that **homosexuality is linked to urban and modern life**.

These stereotypes and attitudes are not restricted to migratory or rural phenomena. At the other schools, we have found cases of **resistance among families** to dealing with issues related to emotional-sexual diversity.

Thus, although at first they denied that the parents were opposed, of the ten schools we visited, in another five the aforementioned resistance and obstacles were found. Below is a summary of the specific cases and the responses of the schools:

- E-6: the family refused to allow their son to work on emotional-sexual diversity in class. The school counsellors believe that 'they did not have a clear position and ideas', that 'they had got mixed up', arguing that the other children in the family did take the course. The school 'let it go', as it was an 'isolated case', something 'anecdotal', 'unimportant'. In the end, they sent the student to the library while the course was being presented.
- E-3: Following the prevention and 'put it on-put it on him' condom use campaign, one family complained that there were going to be 'condoms all over the place', leading one to understand, perhaps, that this campaign was promiscuous. The counsellors provided more information, emphasizing that this was a campaign of the Basque government, that the idea came from government institutions and had their support. In the end, they went forward with the campaign.
- E-8. A mother who has an adopted daughter complained to the school management: she did not want them to talk about family diversity so that her daughter would not ask questions about the subject at home. In the end, the subject was not discussed in class.
- E-2. A mother refused to allow her 12-year-old son to work on the subject of sexuality because she saw it as something 'murky' and her son had no interest in it. The teacher was of the opinion that 'the kid was going to end up in a world of trouble' if he did not go to class that day and responded to the family, 'Look, you have your point of view. But of the 29 in class, each one has their own home.' It appears that they did agree to the workshop being presented.
- E-5. A family did not accept the sexual orientation of their five-year-old son or that he verbalizes his desires and stands out because he wants to be a girl. After suffering homophobic bullying at school, a protocol was applied, transferring the student to another school.

As it is possible to see from this summary, resistance from families is taken into account and frequently the decision is to grant the wishes of the family and not deal with the problem. The

teachers believe that the gang of friends, the **group of peers, remains the most open and necessary space for relationships.**

However, when neither families nor friendships can meet the cognitive, emotional and/or relational needs of the children, the school emerges as a space par excellence where it is possible to hear and share different opinions and interpretations. They know that within the classroom, they can put a stop to homophobic attitudes or discourses to some extent, while also acknowledging the existence of an official discourse and a hidden curriculum.

The involvement of the teaching staff varies considerably and can be represented using the image of a fan: at the extremes, people highly involved and uninvolved with emotional-sexual diversity; and in the centre, the teachers with an average commitment, who are generally the majority.

School curriculum and cross-disciplinary approaches

Emotional-sexual education is not integrated into the school curriculum and therefore it depends on whether each teacher deals with it or not during the year when a related subject is covered.

While reproduction and sexual organs are studied in the subject of '*ingurunea*' (natural, social and cultural sciences), for example, the subject of sexuality is dealt with (E-8, E-5) or they talk about HIV/AIDS or STDs, sexually transmitted diseases (E-3) in a supplementary and parallel way during tutorial sessions. Handled in this way, it is easy to **reduce sexuality to reproduction and dangerous sexual practices, etc..**

Other times, when issues such as norms and co-existence are highlighted in tutorial sessions, there is an attempt to extrapolate to all levels. Handled in this way, **sexual diversity could come to be confused with an individual choice whose acceptance goes no further than mere tolerance.** We have observed a similar trend with displays of mere respect for emotional or family diversity.

Along these same lines, as a way of working on social skills such as respect, there is also the idea of not working on homophobia exclusively, but in a general way as part of the subject of citizenship (E-6). From this perspective, the tendency is to look at **homophobia as just another form of discrimination;** discrimination on the basis of sex is not looked at. They go into detail regarding rights in the abstract and less regarding the real application of these rights, which involve changes in ways of living, feeling and thinking to make them more open.

The people interviewed explicitly mentioned some other disadvantages of cross-disciplinary approaches:

- The **lack of a conscious, systematic, technical and specific handling of the subject**. Instead of a common plan, a dispersion of responsibility, and a general and superficial handling of content.
- At the same time, the **lack of a comprehensive perspective**, as certain subjects are only dealt with in certain years, when it is understood that identity-forming processes are ongoing, that they do not stop at a given age or academic year.
- **It depends on the involvement, sensitivity, knowledge and training of the teaching staff**, and the stereotypes or prejudices they have, how they experience their sexuality, etc.
- Using a cross-disciplinary approach to **resolve conflicts 'at the moment'** and not as prevention.

Among the potential benefits of a cross-disciplinary approach, they highlight:

- The possibility of **working on the subject equally during any year and at any time**,.
- In this regard, as a **tool for prevention** against a specific, temporary or daily conflict.
- The possibility of dealing with these issues **on a theoretical level or on an emotional level**.
- Throw out the practice of: 'Good morning! Today we are going to talk about emotions and then we will move on to algebra and then ...'
- Formally, **the entire teaching staff is involved**..

Diversity workshops

As we have just seen, emotional-sexual education is not integrated into the school curriculum. **There is significant variety among workshops** and we can identify three types:

- Workshops which have a direct connection to emotional-sexual development: emotional-sexual education, feelings and emotions, empowerment, sexual relations, family diversity, gender equality, gender-based violence, anatomy, physiology, contraceptives, venereal diseases, etc.
- Workshops that deal with emotional-sexual development indirectly: values, norms, respect, symbolic or cooperative games, co-existence, unity, conflict resolution, etc.
- Other types of sessions: study techniques and cognitive skills; careers or academic guidance (above all in upper secondary school), etc.

These workshops are characterized by being offered, organized and/or presented by **agents outside the school during tutorial periods**:

Highlights among the virtues of these courses and workshops are:

- As they are agents from outside the school and specialists in the subject (social educators, psychologists, etc.), **they ensure a climate of trust and comfort for sharing experiences, ideas and doubts**.
- They increase **relations between the school and its environment** and collaboration

among different agencies and agents.

- They use **practical teaching materials** which are **not conventional** in formal education.
- They **increase the motivation**, attention and involvement of students.

Drawbacks of these courses and workshops include:

- **School staff is not usually actively involved** in the development of the workshops.
- They are unfamiliar with the content, dynamics and uses. They do not help their training as teachers or continued use at the school once the workshop has concluded.
- **The specialists do not become a reference resource** with a close and continued presence at the schools.
- As they are temporary and defined, emotional-sexual diversity continues to be dealt with **as something exceptional** ('today somebody is going to come and talk to us about ...').
- They are organized **based on temporary priorities and placed on the calendar**.
- **They depend on the economic, material and human resources** of each agent at any given time.
- Ultimately, whether or not these workshops are offered **depends on the involvement of the school's management or counselling service**.

Socio-educational policies and experiences

In addition to trying to deal with emotional-sexual education through a cross-disciplinary approach within the official curriculum and developing a variety of workshops, courses and sessions during tutorial periods, we would now like to highlight the implementation of other socio-educational policies.

These experiences are distinguished from those discussed above insofar as they involve a large part of the education community, generally last longer, deal with problems at their root and try to find communal solutions.

- **Training for socio-educational agents.**
- **Increasing relationships with the surrounding area:** presenting dynamic and hands-on socio-educational activities outside the school.
- **Activities aimed at developing skills and improving self-esteem among students.**
- **Specific anti-bullying policies within the school:** implementing a prevention protocol made up of an anonymous questionnaire on bullying which can be used to get an overview of the group and be able to anticipate problems with co-existence (E-3).
- **Being careful with language** in communication and relations with families.
- **Allocating resources to the schools** to carry out inter-cultural awareness projects in the classroom.

Educational materials and/or resources

With regard to access to and use of educational materials and/or resources at the schools, we found two very different extremes: professionals who have abundant materials and professionals who lack materials.

They are schools that prepare their own material, based on what they have been working on for years. And there are some where the issues covered depend on whether or not there is material to do the work, and above all, there is a lack of materials in Basque. Ultimately, the work of teaching is dependent on the existing resources and involvement of the teaching staff.

With regard to historic, scientific or artistic figures who are LGTBs, it is unanimously agreed that they do not appear in textbooks or that their LGTB status is not pointed out. One of the teachers warned that it is necessary to take care in this regard, given that sometimes 'it is not even relevant' when it does not contribute to this specific aspect of their life or to the specific event, or that at that historic moment the word 'gay' was not used in this way, or that perhaps they are not good points of reference as some experience or experienced their emotional-sexual identity with fear and torment. In the background, there emerges another idea: that all the materials and resources must form part of the official curriculum.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PREPARING NEW MATERIALS

Taking into account the perceptions, representations and discourses regarding LGBT people and the difficulties and potential benefits of educating students in emotional-sexual diversity expressed throughout this paper, we would like to end by presenting some suggestions for preparing new educational material. The general characteristics of these materials would be:

- **Materials which deal with the many nuances of emotional-sexual diversity.**
- **Materials intended for all stages and periods of education,.**
- **Materials that deal with the ways students communicate, their rhythms, codes and languages.**
- **Dynamic, hands-on material** intended to increase and/or strengthen the competencies, skills and self-esteem of the student body as a whole.
- **Material intended for all students regardless of age, social class, gender, sex, national origin/association, religion, etc.**
- **Materials which deal with the specific circumstances of the school and its environment.**
- **Materials and resources in Basque.**
- **Including references and/or mentions of LGBT people .**
- **Creating a wide variety of resources that present the reality of LGBT people.**
- **Preparing guides for the entire education community .**

- **University level materials** to raise awareness among and train future teachers.

SHARING THE DIAGNOSIS WITH THE FOCUS GROUPS

This third part of the document has three aims. Firstly, to **share the diagnosis** made of bullying and homophobia in education and gather the contributions made by those agencies with a significant impact on the social setting of the minors. Secondly, to **analyse the best ways of raising awareness** of these problems in schools and seek alliances to implement them. Finally, to find out what they think is the **best educational material** to approach affective-sexual diversity.

To this end, we will present the main conclusions reached in three discussion groups with different agencies and individuals. Specifically, the third stage of this project has received contributions from primary and secondary education teaching staff, parents and family associations (PTA), LGBT associations, educational, social and political groups and individuals of all kinds, as well as different representatives of the Basque public education administration, over three sessions held in each of the three capitals of the Basque Country (Vitoria-Gasteiz, Bilbao and Donostia-San Sebastián)

Homophobia and role maintenance

One of the first questions raised in the groups focuses on the validity of gender roles.

The **heteronormative role** is tabled and the discussion is rich in concepts. They point out that we come from a prevailing sexual model centred on heterosexuality, where sexualities are demarcated (FG-Bilbo). The **phallogentric** (and coitocentric) model was mentioned, transmitting a distorted sexed body for boys and girls.

As well as these kinds of distortions, there is broad agreement in the groups when it is pointed out that **sexuality is still one of the great taboos** in Basque society. Although the subject is talked about more and more openly, they point out that it is not treated as something serious. Sexuality is talked about in a joking fashion, disqualifying what is different (FG. Vitoria-Gasteiz);

In this sense, maintenance and/or **strengthening of gender roles by minors** is something that is both of interest and **concern**. All the groups are aware that tastes are defined from infancy (pink for girls, blue for boys), as well as hobbies (sport, games) (FG Vitoria-Gasteiz), places (where they sit in class, when they enjoy free time, etc) (FG. Donostia-San Sebastián), what girls aren't allowed to do but boys are (FG-Bilbo), all on the basis of gender.

It is clear that girls are ever more **enslaved by image** (FG. Donostia-San Sebastián), a rigid model of the woman who is "attractive, beautiful, of a certain size, soft-speaking, etc." (FG. Vitoria-

Gasteiz). They also point out that they are more **inhibited**.

With boys, we have a **strict ideal of masculinity** that is difficult to achieve: good at sport, tough, using homophobic/sexist insults or talking about sex so that others don't think that "he's a bit stupid".

So we can see that the prototypes are being maintained and, in some cases, are being reinforced. And **maintenance of gender roles**, heterosexism and machismo are precisely the models that strengthen homophobia. We should remember that pointing out or persecuting someone who doesn't fit in with the accepted norms and call him or her "provocative" (FG. Vitoria-Gasteiz, FG. Bilbo) is one of the ways homophobia manifests itself and a major factor in homophobic bullying.

More Bullying and greater "tolerance": Towards the normalisation of differences?

We have just seen the link the groups have established between homophobia and machismo in a heterocentric system. Even so, the three groups believe that the situation is significantly better nowadays... "Of course!", "Nobody's going to say they're against it!" (FG. Vitoria-Gasteiz). When people talk about **homosexuality**, they know that everybody uses the words **tolerance and respect**. Politically correct as well. These are precisely the themes that have led to **heated debate** in the three groups.

While there is greater formal tolerance, we can't see changes in specific attitudes (FG-Bilbo). Not only as regards sexual diversity, they feel that youngsters are **more aggressive, towards everything in general**, putting in doubt the diagnosis offered as regards the greater openness among youngsters.

The groups point out a qualitative and quantitative increase in aggressiveness. Insults and verbal or psychological violence, violence between lesbians, that come up against the figure of the male as aggressor, bullying, cyberbullying, etc. (FG. Bilbao, FG. Donostia-San Sebastián),

The Vitoria-Gasteiz group **warns about this "mask": homophobia is concealed by false formal respect** and homosexuality is defined as something extraordinary, distant and strange. However the present situation can't be compared to that of a few decades ago and significant progress has been made by the LGBT group in the legal field.

The debate becomes livelier with the adoption of postures that seek **systematic change** and those that seek the **progressive normalisation of diversity**. The latter value the small advances made positively and are certainly optimistic. Uneven tempos are key factors in these debates, although a point they have in common seems to appear: all the groups criticise this apparently "tolerant" and "equality-based" attitude.

With relation to this debate, the groups identify three urgent tasks that should be taken into

account:

- “We come from a prevailing sexual model centred on heterosexuality and are trying to create a new sexual model of how to be/live as a man/woman in many different ways. But... which one? how? We are on the way, everybody’s working at it. We have this debate” (FG-Bilbo)
- “We need a clear, concise watchword to face up to the dominant heterosexual-heteronormative model, as has been done with violence against women” (FG. Donostia-San Sebastián)
- In this sense, we need “unified consensus” (FG-Bilbo)

New times, new educational approaches

Another topic that didn’t appear in the diagnosis but was discussed in the groups dealt deals with **teaching values and teaching knowledge**.

This time, we talk about **comprehensive education** that deals with teaching both knowledge and values, skills, etc., which distributes rights and duties, while questioning the figure of the teacher.

Teacher or educator, some educate actively and others passively, explicitly or implicitly. Among other problems, it is mentioned that teaching values is a very broad field, schools differ widely, older teachers have more problems with this and are not committed to this renewed approach.

The debate also looked at the **importance given to values at home**, and the knowledge taught at school (FG-Bilbao). With the rise of the media and new technologies, both **schools and families are losing ground as socialising elements**. New socialising agents such as videogames, TV, TV series, movies, etc. provide young people and adolescents with role models and points of reference (FG. Vitoria-Gasteiz) with very marked male and female roles (FG-Bilbao).

Families and their educational functions

The functions of families are closely related to the fields of action of the new social-educational approaches and deserve special attention, being one of the topics most debated in the groups.

Nobody disagrees when it is pointed out that “**children are very natural**”, that they live their lives very naturally and “the problem lies with the parents” (FG-Bilbao). On this basis, families are the quintessential socialising agents, with the children being **clean slates who do at school what they see at home**.

Families and teaching staff question each other. The focus of attention is on families and we know that “**getting into the home is difficult**” (FG-Bilbao), while acting in schools is relatively simpler and may well be a more appropriate scenario. Infant teachers point out that “you have to get to the root of things”.

Here, the Bilbao group mentions that **modern families are neither well-educated nor trained**. A lot is said about the education received by the parent of children at school today. Parents who were taught knowledge at school and who have to have it what we are talking about explained to them, when we speak of affective-sexual skills.

Interest, curiosity and concern are the keywords that define the situation of modern families and their relations with sexology professionals.

The vital role of schools regarding diversity

There is **wide agreement on the functions of schools**. **Affective-sexual education is not a priority** for schools but should be: this means that schools cannot shirk these responsibilities and should start accepting them, just as they have done with other problem areas:

In this sense, **family diversity is already a reality in schools** (the Bilbao group even talks about a “baby boom” among lesbians) and the interrelationship between schools and the social setting mean that it is vital for them to deal with this reality. Children from homoparental families and their own families, or LGBT students, have been more isolated at school because centres keep “putting off the problem” because they are a minority.

As regards the teaching staff, they feel that lack of training is often an excuse to wash their hands of the whole thing. Lack of specific training when they were being trained and now, lack of training and/or lack of security.

Their excessive educational functions and precarious nature of their jobs, particularly supply teachers, make the quality of the education significantly worse in every sense.

In addition, when we look at the different kinds of educational establishments and the different problems they face in specific environments (mainly towns and villages), we find all kinds of opinions. From their experience as a student (FG. Bilbao) and a teacher (FG. Donostia-San Sebastián), they believe that **religious schools** find teaching values difficult (“they do little... and can do little”). Some people have been agreeably surprised: “I’ve been to religious and private schools with all my prejudices, but they really work at it, in every year, they really get involved”; “German, religious school... treats the subject like a state school” (FG. Vitoria-Gasteiz).

Something that the groups have detected and which has an effect on diversity and actions taken regarding bullying is a **lack of social and institutional support at all levels**.

The balance of power can be seen in schools (between equals and friends), where clearly homophobic attitudes and values are not confronted by the group, and are tolerated and supported or congratulated for showing a passive attitude. The involvement of the management of the educational centre and the position of the teaching staff are tasks that must be dealt with

urgently.

With regard to all the above, those present pointed out that “**a comprehensive analysis must be made in this area by the centres, associations, PTAs and other agents involved in education**” (FG-Bilbao).

AGREEING WAYS TO IMPROVE IN THE SOCIAL SETTINGS WITH THEIR AGENTS

The educational centres

Educational centres **have to** give expression to and **develop affective-sexual diversity**. A key factor is a greater understanding and **visibility of these realities**. Even when it would be ideal to have a normal, natural situation where it isn't necessary to state the sexual identity, orientation or affective preference/desire of the teaching staff or students in the centres, the overall opinion is that all of this should be present (Giving it space and a voice), with effective channels it.

Specifically, the groups believe that the following are the most important subjects to deal with explicitly in schools:

- **Sexual and affective orientation**, differentiating identity from desire (FG. Vitoria-Gasteiz), making it possible for each individual to construct the way they are, their sexuality and their body, deconstructing gender (FG-Donostia-San Sebastián).
- **Work to ensure coexistence**, not segregating and sharing spaces in an atmosphere of respect and solidarity, in response to individualism, a model that reinforces the aggressors (FG-Bilbo).
- **Boost self-esteem**, empowerment and safety as ways of standing up to bullying and projecting the comprehensive development of individuals and groups. Three examples illustrate the situations where these values need to be developed.

Two ways of approaching these topics are suggested. The first consists of putting students in the situation, mainly **using symbolic cooperative games** (role-play, theatre) and being very careful with the language used: “the presumption of heterosexuality”. The second involves **approaching these topics separately**, with groups of boys with a male tutor and groups of girls with a female tutor, then sharing them in mixed groups. In all of this, an atmosphere of confidence must be generated to deal with fears and embarrassment.

The participants not only discussed student-oriented strategies, the **teaching staff must also find time and space to deal with the subject**. Staff reunions (FG-Bilbao) provide the perfect time and place to share ideas on these questions. They also point out that all action taken, whether as part of the curriculum or transversal (through workshops), “should be integrated in the study plan of the centre”.

One of the most important challenges faced by educational centres is to move on from being

passive to being active.

With regard to this, they are critical of the fact that **the victims are penalised more often** (removing them from class and taking them to other centres) **than the aggressors** (FG-Donostia-San Sebastián). Each agent carries out certain functions and has certain responsibilities. The following are some of these:

- **Members of the teaching staff as a whole are points of reference** and can't "pass the hot potato", even when they're jobs are not secure. They need to be trained so that "they know how not to be overcome by the problem when they come up against it", even more so because "they get worried when they realise have a problem and look for advice" (FG-Bilbo).
- **Taking LGBT teaching staff** as a model that is close at hand, they should be points of reference in their respective centres (FG-Bilbao) and should be made more visible (FG-Donostia-San Sebastián) without being made responsible for all affective-sexual education.
- **Specialists from outside the centres** aren't involved with the day to day work of the centres and can be more accepted by students, without exempting the teaching staff from their responsibilities (FG. Vitoria-Gasteiz). They are particularly necessary "when nothing is done; I'd be grateful, I'd go and see the class", "the students are really grateful, it's about "putting coloured dots on a grey wall" (FG-Donostia-San Sebastián).
- **Specialists within the centres.** It would be ideal to have a sexology service within schools, an adviser who could be the point of reference for students with regard to subjects that can be regarded as intimate (FG-Donostia-San Sebastián); the counselling service is too overstretched to handle these subjects.
- **Mediation groups between equals.** "There isn't any bullying when the leader doesn't allow it. He/she cuts it off. We have to work with groups in the schools, they are created.

Families and PTAs

When sharing the diagnosis it was mentioned that families are vital agents in the education of their sons and daughters. The responsibilities of the same are also unavoidable.

They once again point out that, in the words of a mother whose son suffered homophobic and transphobic bullying, "**the problem lies with the parents of the children doing the bullying, they don't want to know anything about it**, "no, my child no" (FG-Bilbo). In other cases of bullying, it's mentioned that "they accuse the victim "of provoking" and that "when there was a problem for the PTAs, nobody came, neither the families of the victims or those of the aggressors" (FG. Vitoria-Gasteiz). It is important to talk once more about the fears and taboos of the adults, the pressures on families to become "model" mothers and fathers.

So, bearing in mind the responsibilities, influences and experiences of the families, the following good practices are suggested for the families:

- "**Parents should communicate fluidly**, something that doesn't happen" (FG-Bilbao)
- **Support and affection.** " (My mum told me) the important thing is to be happy, it's better to

confront the rest all your life than have to confront yourself all your life” (FG-Donostia-San Sebastián)

- **Actively involve the PTAs** in preventing and solving conflicts and in the day to day life of the centres.
- **Show and favour other family models.** Mention is made of the blog by a “modern mother” who talks about her experiences with a lesbian daughter from her viewpoint as a heterosexual mother.

The associations

With regard to the LGBT associations, the following are some of the virtues mentioned in the discussion groups:

- **Company, identification.** “Meet people, find themselves so as not to feel alone, so they can see they’re not strange, that there are others like them” (FG-Bilbao), that “it helps them not to be unhappy, which is something at least” (FG-Donostia-San Sebastián)
- **Raise awareness of LGBT realities and make them more visible.** “I got married in the town square. Some accept it and others don’t, but they say: “he’s always been around”; “You’re you, you haven’t changed a bit (FG-Bilbao)
- **Wide experience in training and consultancy** especially with students and also some of the teaching staff, and more and more with families (FG. Vitoria-Gasteiz)

As well as that, leisure-time groups of all kinds are other socialising agents with responsibilities regarding non-formal and affective-sexual education. The following virtues of these kinds of groups are mentioned:

- **Share spaces and times associated with relaxation and fun.** “It’s important to involve sports groups, that’s where they have fun” (FG. Vitoria-Gasteiz)
- **Shared experiences with couples from other backgrounds, ages, sex,** etc. mentions the “Legazpi championship”, where groups of girls also take part (FG. Vitoria-Gasteiz)

Other kinds of associations and groups, such as women’s and/or feminist associations, or youth groups such as the youth assemblies, as agents involved and/or companions willing to support LGBT demands (FG. Vitoria-Gasteiz).

We also have other experts, the sexologists, who are active agents as regards education, advice and reflection.

The government

From this overall approach, slight discrepancies occur about tempos and agents with regard to the official curriculum. On the one hand, we have those agents and agencies that believe the problem is structural and seek a non-heterosexual focused curriculum, meaning a new curriculum. On the other hand, we have those agents and agencies who, apart from going to the root of the system, also seek to make small changes:

- **Seek strategies to materialise diversity through the curriculum.** “another thing is how to bring this about in practice. The curriculum is s big that there are always things that don’t work” (FG. Vitoria-Gasteiz).
- **Express diversity in the textbooks.** “LGBT individuals don’t appear in them, but heterosexuals do, (mention is made of the famous musician Tchaikovsky)...” “...when this fact is not important perhaps should be removed” (FG-Donostia-San Sebastián)
- **The groups agreed with the inefficiency of protocols.** As regards bullying and anti-bullying protocols enough. The over-saturation of the centres leads to many very complex plans being drawn up, but often without enough thought and difficult to implement. Two measures could be taken to this end:
- **The coexistence plans of each centre should deal with diversity** (FG-Bilbo). If necessary, the department of education should lay down the guidelines to guarantee this.
- **Institutional support should be guaranteed**, with the government changing their mindset to praise those who act.

Finally, there are two urgent tasks in the legal field:

- **To guarantee the visibility and awareness of LGBT individuals and groups.** “All the teaching staff appears to be heterosexual (as well as politicians, footballers, etc. they add). They need to act as role models, be points of reference” (FG-Bilbo)
- **To propose, promote and support affective-sexual training in the university**

ABOUT THE MATERIALS

There are all kinds of opinions on the materials currently available. On the one hand, some say that the materials are several years **old and are already obsolete** (FG-Bilbo) or that there aren't enough and even make you embarrassed to use them, e.g. certain VHS tapes (FG. Vitoria-Gasteiz).

However, the Donostia-San Sebastián **group listed a lot of material**, in different formats and aimed at a wide audience. These include documentaries, shorts and films, as well as a collection of books in Basque made up of cards, videos, games, etc. by some famous clowns, which are available in Basque language schools and private homes: LGBT Trivial Pursuit, etc.

The **LGBT associations have most material available** and are also the ones pointing out the existence of this specific material. These associations are precisely the pioneers in creating materials dealing with diversity and against homophobia. However, three of the associations taking part in the groups (the workshops for 15 year olds in Aldarte, Let’s Talk About Homophobia, and the trans comics from Errespetuz) have also described difficulties in using them in educational centres.

The following are some of the other shortcomings of the social-educational support materials used in formal and non-formal schools:

- The materials **are designed for the students to define themselves** (FG. Vitoria-Gasteiz). For example, when the child of a homoparental family is asked to complete a family tree

or fill in a registration form with the names of his/her mother and father for the football team (FG-Bilbo)

- There are **no LGBT references in textbooks** (FG-Bilbo). “As they don’t show it to be natural, those who are different feel different and others want to beat them down” (FG-Bilbo), while the LGBT community is concealed or made invisible, the life and works of heterosexual characters are explained “even when it’s irrelevant” (FG-Donostia-San Sebastian)
- “**The problem lies not so much with the materials but with wanting to use them.** Materials don’t work by themselves, we have to lose our fear of using them” (FG-Bilbo)
- **Other educational media have to be dealt with: the transmission and reproduction of homophobic songs** (“Aitor, gay boy, up your arse”, “last one there’s a queer!”) (FG-Donostia-San Sebastián), with people mostly not understanding what they mean and what effect they have (FG-Bilbo), the development of exclusion games such as musical chairs, etc. (FG-Donostia-San Sebastián)

At this point, when explaining the audiovisual materials to be created by RAINBOW, there are all kinds of reactions: **some feel it is necessary** “to talk about it, so that others feel empowered and don’t feel odd” (FG-Bilbo), or that audiovisual materials are the key, it’s fantastic. They are surrounded by old materials” (FG. Vitoria-Gasteiz). However, others question **whether audiovisual materials are the most important** or only way of transmitting what we need to (FG-Donostia-San Sebastián).

The critical contributions of the three groups provided some keys to creating new materials:

- They should **be aimed at a wide range of sectors and groups**. These include materials for adults (families, PTAs, spare time monitors, etc.), teaching staff in general and future university staff (FG-Bilbo) and, of course, students and youngsters of all ages.
- They should **be accompanied by practical guides for the teaching staff** (FG. Vitoria-Gasteiz),
- They should **provide such resources as pictures, toys, etc.**, just like they’re doing to deal with interculturalism.
- They should **promote the integration/inclusion** of those taking part.
- They should **aim to make people define themselves**, they should promote all-embracing views of life.
- They should **be compatible with the formats used in classrooms** (digital, school 2,0, etc.) and consist of short scenes (FG. Vitoria-Gasteiz)

APPENDIX 1. DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOLS SELECTED AND INTERVIEWEE

In order to prepare the sample, we took into account both the overall profile of the education professionals and the main characteristics of the schools:

With regard to the profile of the interviewees, by sex and the duty they perform at the school, 2 female primary school teachers, 1 male primary school teacher, 3 female secondary school teachers, 3 male secondary school teachers, 6 female counsellors, 1 male counsellor and 2 headmistresses took part in this phase of the project.

In order to cover the different types of schools in the Basque Country, in addition to selecting state schools (6 in total), we looked at different realities at private/state-subsidized schools: more elitist (E-1), religious (E-2), and cooperative such as the *ikastolas* (E-3, E-7)

Lastly, we focused on schools which had presented a workshop on emotional-sexual diversity (all of them except E-10) and a school where a case of bullying led to the suicide of a 14-year-old boy (E-8). Over the course of this project, we discovered other cases of bullying acknowledged by the person interviewed (E-3, E-5, E-7 and E-9), one of them homophobic bullying (E-6).

<i>Interview no.</i>	<i>Area</i>	<i>Province</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Model</i>	<i>People interviewed</i>
<i>E-1</i>	Provincial capital	Gipuzkoa	State-subsidized	A and English	a) Teacher - year 2, secondary (ESO)
<i>E-2</i>	Provincial capital	Bizkaia	State-subsidized/ Religious	A, B and D	b) Secondary school religion teacher c) Teacher - year 4, secondary (ESO) d) Teacher - year 2, <i>bachiller</i> e) Teacher - year 2, <i>bachiller</i> f) Teacher - secondary (ESO)
<i>E-3</i>	Provincial capital	Araba	<i>Ikastola</i>	D	g) Counsellor
<i>E-4</i>	Provincial capital	Araba	State	A	h) Counsellor
<i>E-5</i>	Outskirts of a provincial capital	Gipuzkoa	State	D	i) Headmistress j) Counsellor

<i>E-6</i>	Large city	Bizkaia	State	A, B, D (secondary - ESO) A (upper secondary - Bachiller)	k) Counsellor l) Counsellor
<i>E-7</i>	Mid-sized city	Bizkaia	<i>Ikastola</i>	D	m) Counsellor n) Teacher - secondary (ESO)
<i>E-8</i>	Mid-sized city	Gipuzkoa	State	D	o) Teacher - year 6, primary
<i>E-9</i>	Small city	Bizkaia	State	D	p) Teacher - year 2, primary
<i>E-10</i>	Rural	Gipuzkoa	State	D	q) Headmaster r) Counsellor

APPENDIX 2. DESCRIPTION OF THE DISCUSSION GROUPS

When preparing the discussion groups, we took into account the diverse social and associative fabric of the Basque Country, especially the participation of LGBT collectives, groups working in formal and non-formal education and young people's groups.

The sessions took place on September 21st and 22nd and on October 4th 2011 at central locations that we understood to be neutral, these being the civic and/or cultural centres of the capital cities of the three Basque provinces.

Focus group 1. Vitoria-Gasteiz

	<i>Agent</i>	<i>Gender</i>
<i>Teaching staff</i>	Lesbian teacher at an infant school and member of the 7menos20 group.	F
<i>LGBT association</i>	Member of the Basque LGBT Association - GEHITU	M
<i>Other associations</i>	Member of the Basque Teacher's Union STEE-EILAS , secondary school teacher and father.	M
	Sexologist, working at the EMAIZE sexology centre.	F
	Member of the Gasteiz Youth Assembly , and the feminist group Emeak.	F

	Student and member of the Gasteiz Youth Assembly .	F
<i>Government</i>	Adviser at Berritzegune-Gasteiz (Centre for the support of educational innovation and training for non-university learning), feminist activist and mother.	F
<i>FARAPI</i>	Sociologist and consultant.	F

Focus group 2. Bilbao

	<i>Agent</i>	<i>Gender</i>
<i>Teaching staff</i>	Infant school teacher	M
<i>Families</i>	Mother whose child has suffered from homophobic/transphobic bullying.	F
	Mother of homoparental family and member of the SEHASKA Association.	F
<i>LGBT association</i>	Lawyer from the Gay, Lesbian and Transsexual Advice Centre and the ALDARTE sexual freedom study and documentation centre	F
	Member of the SEHASKA homosexual parent association -	F
<i>Other associations</i>	Trainer and consultant at the guZU sexology and psychology centre.	M
	Member of the ADARRA teaching group and teacher of English.	F
<i>Government</i>	Expert in educational affairs from the Basque Youth Council .	M
<i>FARAPI</i>	Sociologist and consultant.	F

Focus group 3. Donostia-San sebastian

	<i>Agent</i>	<i>Gender</i>
<i>Teaching staff</i>	Music teacher at a state school.	M
	Gay teacher at a religious school.	M
<i>Families</i>	Mother, PTA member and affective-sexual consultant for the HIRUSTA group.	F
<i>LGBT association</i>	Member of the EHGAM Basque Gay-Les Liberation Movement youth group and free-time monitor.	M
<i>Other associations</i>	Member of LAB , the largest education union and student.	F
	Member of the association for a new state school SORTZEN-IKASBATUAZ , head of a state school and mother.	F
<i>Government</i>	Basque Government Berdindu transsexual help centre and member of ERRESPETUZ , the Basque association for the defence and integration of transsexuals.	F
<i>FARAPI</i>	Sociologist and consultant.	F
	Anthropologist and consultant.	F

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EHGAM- Movimiento de Liberación de Gay-Les de Euskal Herria: <http://www.ehgam.org/>

GEHITU- Asociación de Gays, Lesbianas, Transexuales y Bisexuales del País Vasco: <http://www.gehitu.net/loader.php>

MEDEAK: <http://medeak.blogspot.com/>

TRANSEXUALIDAD-EUSKADI. Asociación de personas Transexuales, Travestis y Transgénero de Euskadi: <http://transexualidad-euskadi.blogspot.com/>

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