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**Sexual Diversity in the Workplace: Competences for Social Inclusion**

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"We should indeed keep calm in the face of difference, and live our lives in a state of inclusion and wonder at the diversity of humanity." — George Takei

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#### ACRONYM CLARIFICATION

LGBT: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender.

LGBTI: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersexual.

FELGBTI: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersexual State Federation.

COGAM: Madrid’s Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Ensemble.

## ABSTRACT

In the past decades, western society has contemplated many advances in terms of equality and normalization of Sexual Diversity, but LGBTphobia is still present in all fields. The community has to deal with problems like harassment, mockery or self-exclusion among others. In a society dominated by heteronormativity it's easy to stand out, and many people are forced to hide who they are to prevent exclusion. The concern to hide sexual orientation and / or gender identity at work is one of the difficulties thousands of LGBT employees have to deal with on a daily basis. In order to normalize diversity, it's important to speak up and learn the concepts. A worker who doesn't have unneeded stress caused by fear, insecurity or confrontation with workmates will show better results than one in a complicated situation.

This project is aimed on solving these differences in the work world, using transversal competences in a strategy for Social Inclusion, adapted to different work fields. It includes a theoretical and a practical application. The first part displays facts according to research on the social situation, and a practical strategy to solve the issues and create a safe place for LGBT workers.

**Key Words:** Sexual Diversity, Sexual Orientation, Work World, Transversal Competences, Key Competences, Inclusion.

## RESUMEN

En las últimas décadas, la sociedad occidental ha contemplado muchos avances en términos de igualdad y normalización de la Diversidad Sexual, pero la LGBTfobia todavía está presente en todos los campos. La comunidad tiene que lidiar con problemas como el acoso, la burla o la autoexclusión entre otros. En una sociedad dominada por la heteronormatividad, es fácil destacar, y muchas personas se ven obligadas a ocultar quiénes son para evitar la exclusión. La preocupación por ocultar la orientación sexual y / o la identidad de género en el trabajo es una de las dificultades a la que tienen que enfrentarse miles de empleados/as LGBT a diario. Para normalizar la diversidad, es importante hablar y aprender los conceptos. Un trabajador que no tiene un estrés innecesario causado por el

miedo, la inseguridad o el choque con sus compañeros de trabajo mostrará mejores resultados que uno en una situación complicada.

Este proyecto está orientado a resolver estas diferencias en el mundo laboral, utilizando las competencias transversales en una estrategia para la inclusión social, adaptada a diferentes campos de trabajo. Incluye una aplicación teórica y una práctica. La primera parte muestra los hechos de acuerdo con la investigación sobre la situación social y una estrategia práctica para resolver los problemas y crear un lugar seguro para los trabajadores y trabajadoras LGBT.

**Palabras Clave:** Diversidad Sexual, Orientación Sexual, Puesto del Trabajo, Competencias Transversales, Competencias Clave, Inclusión.

# 1. Introduction

The current situation at the labor market discriminates and segregates certain groups of society because of their sexual orientation and/or expression, regardless of the skills and potential each individual has. Fear of colleagues leaving them out, insults or violence are circumstances that prevent LGBT employees from being their full selves to work, which often cause talented employees to leave workplaces where they don't feel welcome.

Discrimination and occupational segregation deviate for homosexual men, lesbian women, bisexual and transgender people depending on their identity, construction and the expression of their sexuality.

These work conditions affect their quality of life in a negative manner, according to Quick Take (n.d.) nearly three quarters (70%) of non-LGBT employees believe it is “unprofessional” to discuss sexual orientation or gender identity in the workplace, which causes LGBT people to often cover or downplay aspects of their authentic selves (e.g., hiding personal relationships, changing the way they dress or speak) in order to avoid discrimination. When applying for jobs, LGBT people often conceal information about their sexual orientation or gender identity from their résumés in order to avoid bias or discrimination.

The prevailing ignorance in our society about sexual and gender diversity is the main problem we face. In the case of LGBT workers there's an underlying problem where cultural Heterosexual orientation has been idealized and our society educates drawn from this idea, explicitly or implicitly presenting that this is the only possible way to be, thus, those who don't fit this pattern are a subject to ridicule and violence.

Transversal competences are a common language in Europe for qualifying competences, and directly subsume employability, being one of the main points of attention in job interviews and selection processes. The ability to make decisions, stress management, flexibility, initiative or motivation are those qualities that the worker holds and that allow him or her to function in an organizational environment, beyond technical knowledge. All in all, transversal competences are those that explain the difference between a great worker and an excellent worker when they both have identical technical training.

This project is aimed on the competences that work for inclusion. Reaching people that are still involved in the school system is easier, because there's an institutional access for inclusive education, but for workers, companies don't usually have inclusion programs. That's why working on competences bringing this program to the companies will improve equality and help reach a healthier work atmosphere.

### 1.1. Defense and Motivation

People who aren't familiarized with LGBT diversity sometimes question the reasons for showing personal life or "coming out" at work, believing it's a private matter, and those who don't approve it consider it an offense. Previous studies sustain that LGBT workers suffer discrimination caused by their sexual orientation or gender identity, that require an acting protocol and normalization of diversity.

Discrimination and bullying start during the elementary school period, shortening horizons in the job world, which also has a negative impact on the community's self-esteem since they're very young.

The cause of discrimination, harassment and exclusion at the labor market is the fact they're not included in a heteronormative pattern. Heteronormativity is the social belief that



considers heterosexuality as the main norm, and also preconceived ideas about the appearance and behavior of what men and woman are supposed to be like. Often, a woman who is perceived as masculine or a man who is perceived effeminate in his behavior or appearance are victims of discrimination or harassment. In many cases, lesbian, gay and bisexual workers reported having been subject of invasive questions about their private life, and having had to justify the reason why they were not heterosexual.

The inclusion strategy relies on transversal competences to facilitate social interactions and the creation of networks regardless of the physical barriers. Education must regain the effectiveness of these means to promote collaborative learning environments and adapt to social ways and means of coexistence. Acquiring transversal competencies provides workers with the basic knowledge, abilities and qualities required to translate competences into suitable behavior for organizational purposes and include co-workers no matter what they are like.

## 1.2. Similar European projects

ADIM (2019) and GALE (2019) are some of the European Projects working for rights and inclusion for LGBT people in the workplace. They're inspiring and a motivation to develop competences in the workplace focused on equal rights.

### 1.2.1. ADIM

The European project “ADIM” (Advancing in LGBT Diversity Management in the Public and Private) is developed by the Woman's and Equal Opportunities Institute and shows us a great example of cooperation for gender equality between the public and private sectors. The project is financially supported by the European Social Funds.

Some of ADIM's major goals are:

- To strive for more inclusive and normalizing corporate policies.
- To promote zero tolerance policies in order to eliminate sexist or homophobic language.
- Recognizing the psychosocial risk that workplace bullying causes to the LGBT community with an effort to prevent it through plans and action protocol

- To increase awareness and train social agents, company leaders and college students in the field of sexual diversity.

Eighteen major companies have joined the project, eleven are Spanish and seven are Portuguese. Five Spanish and three Portuguese Universities have also joined: Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Universidad de Málaga, Universidad Miguel Hernández de Elche, Universidad de Valladolid and Universidad de Zaragoza. In Portugal: Beira Interior, Aveiro University and Évora University.

ADIM's set off has the purpose contribute to productivity and the business's capacity to innovate through talent management, by creating a safe environment where LGBT workers and students can be themselves. The fact that both companies and universities are involved favors the transfer of knowledge. On the other hand, the project aims to have a multiplying effect favoring its subsequent application to more companies and universities.

#### 1.2.2. GALE

GALE, the Global Alliance for LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) Education is a learning community of educators which works to promote the full inclusion of people who are disadvantaged because of their sexual orientation or gender expression by identifying, enhancing and sharing educational expertise.

As a non-for-profit organization they promote the full inclusion of people who are disadvantaged because of their sexual orientation, sexual identity and their expression by identifying, enhancing and sharing educational expertise.

Their main object is to initiate, coordinate, promote and take care of the interests of an international network of public relations, spokespersons and trainers on LGBT issues, by providing a platform for a learning community, providing various communication means and channels and promoting the exchange and development of knowledge in a variety of ways, performing any acts relating or conducive to the forgoing, all in the widest sense.

GALE develops education projects for companies that might fall short of partners and funding, to help their building capacity program which will support professionalization of small and volunteer based organizations.

An essential part of GALE's work is to create practical local projects for collaboration between LGBT and mainstream institutions, innovation and implementation. Education is seen as a tool which needs to be tailored and implemented in practice. Members of GALE work in Regional Strategy Groups on local strategies and create collaboration in practical pilot projects. GALE support members to create projects by negotiating contracts between local organizations, financial donors and the Alliance itself.

### 1.3.Goals and competences

#### General aim

Fostering transversal skills regarding sexual diversity in order to promote social inclusion within the framework of human rights.

#### Specific aims

- To work for social inclusion focusing on transversal skills in the workplace.
- Promoting inclusive language to avoid normalized offensive terms in its every-day use. Homophobic language isn't always meant to be hurtful, but how often do we use it without thinking?
- Normalizing diversity to prevent social isolation.
- Developing inclusion policies aimed to create a broad environment where people respect and tolerate others.
- Showing employees and employers the importance of working on skills.
- Clarifying concepts such as sexual orientation, gender identity or gender stereotypes, avoiding offensive terms like gender dysphoria.
- Encouraging people who might be living a difficult situation or encounter one to speak up and take action.

#### *Social Educators broad competences the work focuses on*

- Recognition and respect for diversity and multiculturalism: The ability to understand and accept social and cultural diversity as a component personal and collective enrichment in order to develop coexistence among people without making distinctions regarding sex, age, religion, ethnicity, social and political condition.

- Interpersonal Skills: the ability to relate positively with others through empathic listening and clear and assertive expression of what is thought and / or felt through verbal and non-verbal recourses.
- Adapting to new situations: the ability to adapt to changing situations, modifying the behavior to come together, with versatility and flexibility.

#### *Specific Skills*

- Knowing the framework of social education and the models developed in other countries with special attention to the initiatives of the European Union.
- Diagnosing complex situations that support the development of socio-educative actions.
- Designing and developing processes of social participation and community development.
- Developing and managing means and resources for socio-educational intervention.
- Applying specific methodologies of socio-educational action.

### 1.4. Work Structure

The present work is divided into two parts, an initial research that analyzes the current situation of LGBT people, focusing mainly on the work field.

The second part is an integration strategy from Social Education that aims to eliminate differences to create a safe place for all workers. The idea of respect for the varied manifestations of diversity and identity are promoted, raising awareness that it is a possibility to be this way in their environment. Also, the consequences that each individual attitude can have regarding discrimination between colleagues, and members of the community in which they live.

## 2. Conceptual framing

### 2.1. Social context and Work world:

In order to understand the needs and face the problem we must examine the current situation. The next point focuses on a social reality the LGBT community faces in Castilla y León, Spain and Internationally, emphasizing on the workplace.

#### 2.1.1. The LGBT community in Castilla y León:

Castilla y Leon gets the worst marks when it comes to integrating homosexual and transsexual people, according to the Spanish National LGBT Map developed by the Spanish Confederation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transsexual Colleagues supported by the Observatory of Diversity and Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity.

The study developed by FELGBT (2019) reviews the inclusion rate, the present homophobia and the community's invisibility, giving Castilla y Leon 1.2 points over a total of 15, highlighting the fact that 81 percent of the respondents quickly affirmed they would like to leave their region do to the problems caused by their sexual orientation. In second place we would find Murcia, with 2.1 points and 74 percent of people willing to leave, and Extremadura comes in third, with 2.1 points and 71 percent.

According to the map:

- 80% of LGBT people never take the step to admit their sexual orientation.
- 57% have suffered verbal or physical abuse
- Only 10% report the attacks or press charges.
- The majority of these offenses take place in elementary and high school

Even though our society seems to be more open and tolerant in recent times, and has accepted diversity as never before, the results of the surveys are horrifying. This is the main reason to keep on pushing to normalize and make the community visible.

The world is becoming more polarized politically speaking, ultraconservative groups are trying to stop equality policies and untravel what has been achieved. In Europe, these groups are mobilizing to try to prevent same-sex marriage, which isn't legal in all European countries. If these beliefs persist, all the achievements we've lived in the last years will be at risk.

### 2.1.2. LGBTphobia.

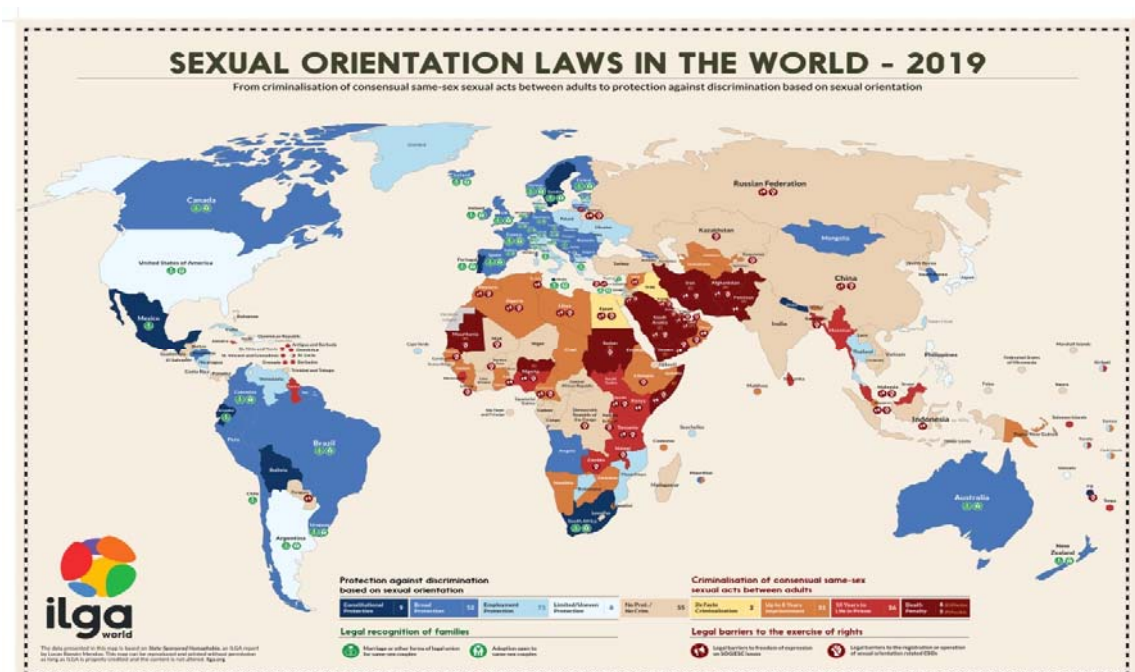
People with homosexual or bisexual orientations have long been stigmatized. According to Herek (1990) , with the rise of the gay political movement in the late 1960s, however, homosexuality's condemnation as immoral, criminal, and sick came under increasing scrutiny. (Herek, 2000) Like institutional racism and sexism, heterosexism pervades societal customs and institutions. It operates through a dual process of invisibility and attack. Homosexuality usually remains culturally invisible; when people who engage in homosexual behavior or who are identified as homosexual become visible, they are subject to attack by society. The term homophobia, was coined by Weinberg in the late 60's, who used homophobia to label heterosexuals fear of relating with homosexuals as well as homosexuals' self-loathing. The word first appeared in print in 1969 and was subsequently discussed at length in Weinberg's 1972 book *Society and the Healthy Homosexual*.

The Federation Planned Parenthood (2019) describes transphobia as the fear, hatred, disbelief, or mistrust of people who are transgender, thought to be transgender, or whose

gender expression doesn't conform to traditional gender roles. Transphobia can prevent transgender and gender nonconforming people from living full lives free from harm.

- Transphobia can take many different forms, including:
- Negative attitudes and beliefs.
- Aversion to and prejudice against transgender people.
- Irrational fear and misunderstanding.
- Disbelief or discounting preferred pronouns or gender identity.
- Derogatory language and name-calling.
- Bullying, abuse, and even violence.

Most of Europe and the US is relatively accepting of the LGBT community; the issues that gay and trans people face here are minor in comparison to countries where displays of homosexuality can lead to prison, torture and death.



Source *ILGA Sexual Orientation Laws*

ILGA, the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (Mendos, 2019) develops a report every year, that scrutinizes the situation LGBT community lives around the world. They point to a number of victories in local and global organizing. Many

states have decriminalized same-sex relationships and fewer trans people are made to undergo forced divorce or sterilization or other nonsensical interventions in order to change their legal gender. Public health authorities increasingly depathologize trans people in health classifications. Marriage in many places allows recognition of same sex couples and same sex couples can sometimes adopt. Conversion therapy is under scrutiny as an unethical and illegal practice, as is the non-consensual surgical intervention used to ascribe gender or sex to intersex infants and young kids, and LGBTI organizing remains vibrant from the local to the global (2019).

Although we've advanced hugely, a lot of people still believe we're living a decline in rights or simply a continuation of the hard times that have always been. People in many marginalized groups have become and/or still are targets for physical, psychological and verbal abuse in both global North and South alike. Spikes in hate crimes and other violent acts have been noted in many areas, and harassment and threats abound in social media. People unfairly targeted because of their relationship to gender or sexuality or their appearance, or their expressions of love or desire. The human rights system is under attack in many places, underfunded and maligned. Immigrants and refugees on several continents, including some who might call themselves LGBTI, are denied the legal right to seek asylum.

### 2.1.3. LGBT in the workplace

In Spain, LGBT discrimination cases at work are the order of the day. Non-official studies have been developed involving this matter, but according to Valenciano (2013), president of ANDET (National Association for Workers Defense) the number of cases has grown over 70 percent in the past year. We don't certainly know if the number of cases has raised, or the fact people feel more open to press charges and do something about it may have affected the high number of reports. This situation has forced the association to start a specific program for this community.

Forty-six percent of LGBT people hide who they are at work. Fifty percent of non-LGBT workers don't think there are any LGBT people at their workplace.



The EMIDIS Report (Rebollo, Gisbert, et al., 2016) points out that “out of all diversities a company should protect and potentiate, sexual and gender diversity is one with very specific profiling”. One of the most specific qualities is that it’s an invisible aspect, LGBT people can go to work unnoticed, not expressing any “difference” but they experience the fear of getting caught that could involve gossiping, blackmail, prejudice or stigma.

Visibility is an absolute right for the LGBT community and for the company it would mean an absence of conflict. Anyone who wants to become visible must do so having the absolute guarantee that their sexual orientation or gender identity or expression will not have an influence in any way, for better or for worse, in their consideration as a worker, in the status they have, or aspire to achieve at the place of work. The legal conquests carried out in Spain in recent years does not guarantee social equality. The fact FELGTB receives as many inquiries as it does in terms of discrimination in the workplace is actually a result of the increased visibility.

In the study on discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in Spain, prepared by FELGTB and COGAM (López, Generelo, & Arroyo, 2013), out of 762 people who were consulted, 30% had experienced discrimination in the labor sphere.

Forms and situations of discrimination:

- Jokes at work
- Locks in the professional promotion
- Barriers to access work
- Discriminatory treatment by their colleagues
- Labor harassment
- Express renunciation of their labor rights: marriage permits.
- Self-exclusion of some companies or sectors.

Situation transsexual people specifically suffer:

- Challenges to enter a job in equal conditions.
- Problems maintaining the job during the transition process.
- Situation of rejection or exclusion and self-esteem issues at work during their transition, especially if the job is prior to the transition process.

- Difficulties in the repeated request for permits for medical visits that may cause the non-renewal of the employment contract.
- Difficulties in the period of surgical reassignment given the absence of regulation regarding collective agreements. The refusal of some Autonomous Communities to assume these treatments, requires constant transfers and that increases the request for permits regardless of what your label happens to be, which is the first thing people notice. Labels are always the first identifier that people are going to judge you based on, the more we can break down those barriers or remove them and realize we're just people and co-workers, the happier we will be.

### *Social Situation at Work*

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people who are out at work don't hesitate or suffer while hiding aspects of their personalities, meaning they feel more confident and progress within the business, but the reality is that a very high number remain in the closet.

According to a study released by Huffington Post (2017), LGBT survey respondents expressed they are high levels of discrimination in job interviews. Studies across Europe have indicated that approximately 20 percent of individuals who identify as being LGBT felt they experienced job-hunting because of their sexual orientation. Fear keeps LGBT employees closeted at work, LGBT employees prefer to remain closeted about their sexual orientation and gender identity because they fear that being themselves would result in them losing connections with coworkers, or that they might not be offered opportunities for development or advancement.

Talented LGBT employees leave their workplaces because they do not feel welcomed. The same study shows that nearly one in every ten LGBT employees has left their job because the work environment was unwelcoming. These employees believed that it was unprofessional to openly talk about their sexual orientation and gender identity in the workplace. Thus, further research indicates that more than one-third of LGBT employees lie about their personal lives at work.

Compared to their LBG colleagues, transgendered people face more employment issues. Transgendered people face double the normal rate of employment with approximately 90 percent of the transgendered population experiencing mistreatment on the job.

Some of the reasons, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people choose not to disclose their sexuality at work and hide their private lives from colleagues and clients are:

- Fear of homophobia or exclusion.
- To avoid getting fired.
- They're more likely to get promoted if they hide it.

LGBT employees compare evading questions about family life to dodging bullets, if they think that revealing their sexuality will make work relations difficult, in any kind of job, meeting or factory. Transgender people, whose sexuality often has nothing to do with the discrimination they encounter, face further stigma because of the extended lack of understanding of the issue. Many choose to leave their workplace in order to undergo their transition. As well as a wider representation of gay and trans people in business, we also need straight allies to be vocal about their backing and we need businesses to make a stand.

Many LGBT Associations have reported this situation. When one of these cases happens, workers resort and rely on their help. A lot of workers are silent, because attending one of these associations means they must publicly announce they're LGBT, which they have the right to hide. That's why it's important to normalize the situation at different workplaces, this way we can reach people who wouldn't look for help because of the complications it would involve.

Ximo Cádiz ( 2013), president of ANDET, has established an action protocol to find a solution to this problem. These are five steps people are advised to take in case of harassment or discrimination:

- Know your rights: you have the same rights as any other citizen.
- Recognize discrimination: sometimes a situation can be justified with fake arguments to hide intolerance; for example, someone getting fired disguising it as economic causes. We must observe if the changes happen after a singular event.

- Gather evidence: if someone were to press charges in case of discrimination, it's important for them to prove it. It might be complicated to prove, and colleagues don't always show their support to workers in this situation, so we must do what we can to gather evidence.
- Report a problem: People can attend Work Inspection or Social Jurisdiction to press charges. Other foundations like ANDET or FELGTB offer counseling and advice for the best option for workers.
- Reach an agreement: if someone were to get fired, sometimes it's not healthy to keep on pushing, so they should at least reach a good agreement.

The Guardian (2014) affirms a company that can pledge its support to employees irrespective of their skin color, gender or sexuality stands to benefit hugely; firstly, by creating a sense of empowerment among employees and secondly by setting an industry standard that can pave the way for change across society. At the end, our job is where most people spend most of their life. The strategy works on normalizing a situation and making jobs a healthy place for everyone.

#### *Workplace Education*

Other ways of avoiding discrimination are the Safe Space Programs, that work to create a safe environment in the workplace. Ballpoint University Counseling Center (n.d.) show how Many LGBT employees create groups to help each other out and face difficult situations at work. Safe space programs are designed to let all workers know that discrimination will not be tolerated and that a company respects and values every employee. Some companies post magnets, stickers or posters to help LGBT employees feel supported and safe to be themselves at work.

LGBT employee groups have worked to initiate diversity training programs for their coworkers, which involves bringing an outside consultant to give out workshops. In Valladolid "Fundación Triangulo" works bringing them to all kinds of working areas and companies to assess the needs of each workplace and cooperate with management or human resources.

For transsexual people, there are some specific considerations we must have. Policies that protect gender identity and expression in the workplace help keep companies from forcing employees to adjust to gender stereotypes. Transitioning on the job can be very difficult, some employees even quit their jobs because of the pressure while others choose to transition in their current workplace. For those who decide to find a new job, the job search may be complicated, especially when it comes to providing a complete work history or personal references.

Another issue they face are dress codes. Companies generally have the right to implement dress codes. If the dress code has different rules for men and women, then the current law in most places requires that the rules for each sex be relatively equal in their burdens. Some courts have upheld different dress policies for men and women.

## 2.2. Inclusion and Exclusion

The main goal the strategy pursues to achieve is including people in a place where they spend most of their time. Niklas Luhmann (Corsi, 1996) defines inclusion as the way society allows individuals to be part of communication. Body and conscience are autonomous, but what really distinguishes us is forming part of a social structure. People aren't considered systems as body and conscience are. A person and their characteristics depend on the way they are observed, that will determine their personality in communication. Modern society includes and excludes people at the same time, it's true they take part in communication in all subsystems but aren't an integral part of them. Inclusion and Exclusion take different forms depending on the society we live in, depending on the standards.

This has typically led people who don't fit these parameters to isolation. One of the main goals in the strategy is to fight exclusion, working on parameters and standards that contribute to exclusion. It's based on human rights and the acceptance of diversity. Once we accept it and change the parameters, the differences that would typically isolate a community will disappear and take second place.

Takács (2006) affirms young lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender LGBT people across Europe face discrimination and exclusion in their everyday life. It all starts when they are

very young, experiencing detachment from family and marginalization at school, which can lead to such problems as underachievement and school drop-out, low self-esteem and mental ill-health. These situations have a negative impact on the capacity of young LGBT people to manage the transition from school to work and to become confident and independent adults who can contribute to society. She focuses on the need to bring attention to the social exclusion of young LGBT people to put the issue on the agenda of national and European policy-makers. The effect that discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation and gender identity has on young LGBT people's capacity to be socially included and to become active citizens. It also raises awareness about the multiple forms of discrimination that interact to put young LGBT people at a disadvantage and risk of exclusion. (2006)

### 2.3. Sexual Diversity

For Huckel (2019) gender is one of those things everyone thinks they understand, but most people don't. It's not binary, It's not either/or, in many cases, it's both/and. It's a bit of this and a dash of that.

When we study sexual diversity, we must clarify concepts. Diversity can mean many things to each of us. It's important that each definition reflect the ability to accept and enjoy each other. Diversity is all the ways we're different from each other, it includes race, religion, culture, physical and mental ability, family, socio-economic status and sexual and gender diversity.

When we talk about sexual and gender diversity, it's important to understand these terms that the American Psychological Association (2012) describe as:

- Biological Sex: Sex is typically assigned at birth (or before during ultrasound) based on the appearance of external genitalia. When the external genitalia are ambiguous other indicators (e.g., internal genitalia, chromosomal and hormonal sex) are considered to assign a sex with the aim of assigning a sex that is most likely to be congruent with the child's gender identity (MacLaughlin & Donahoe, 2004). For most people, gender identity is congruent with sex assigned at birth (see cisgender);

for TGNC individuals, gender identity differs in varying degrees from sex assigned at birth.

- Sexual Orientation: A component of identity that includes a person’s sexual and emotional attraction to another person and the behavior and/or social affiliation that may result from this attraction. A person may be attracted to men, women, both, neither, or to people who are genderqueer, androgynous, or have other gender identities. Individuals may identify as lesbian, gay, heterosexual, bisexual, queer, pansexual, or asexual, among others.
  - Gender: refers to the attitudes, feelings, and behaviors that a given culture associates with a person’s biological sex. Behavior that is compatible with cultural expectations is referred to as gender-normative; behaviors that are viewed as incompatible with these expectations constitute gender non-conformity.
  - Gender Identity: A person’s deeply-felt, inherent sense of being a boy, a man, or male; a girl, a woman, or female; or an alternative gender (e.g., genderqueer, gender nonconforming, gender neutral) that may or may not correspond to a person’s sex assigned at birth or to a person’s primary or secondary sex characteristics. Since gender identity is internal, a person’s gender identity is not necessarily visible to others. “Affirmed gender identity” refers to a person’s gender identity after coming out as TGNC or undergoing a social and/or medical transition process.
  - Gender Expression: The presentation of an individual, including physical appearance, clothing choice and accessories, and behaviors that express aspects of gender identity or role.
  - Cisgender: An adjective used to describe a person whose gender identity and gender expression align with sex assigned at birth; a person who is not TGNC.
- The acronyms LGBTQ\*, LGBTQ +, GLBT and LGBTTQ refer to the spectrum of sexual and gender identities. They include lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, two-spirit, queer, questioning, intersex and asexual. The asterisk (\*) or plus sign (+) shows there are other identities included that aren’t in the acronym. These acronyms mean the same as ‘sexual and gender minorities’.

“Teaching Sexual Health” (2019) defines Heteronormality or heteronormativity as a political and economic imposed regulation that enforces heterosexuality as the only acceptable and normal expression of identity, desire and love. It supposes masculine and feminine are substantially complementary. This means sexual preferences and established roles between members in a society are ruled by the binary system (masculine and feminine) in which biological sex always matches with a person’s sexual expression and the assigned sexual attraction.

It’s common to use words that assume everyone is heterosexual and cisgender (heteronormative language). It’s important to recognize that you can’t assume someone’s sexual orientation or gender identity by looking at them.

#### 2.4. Training reference

In order to instruct others, the person who is responsible of giving out the workshop must receive specific training to understand and explain the possible questions the participants may have. That’s why the attachment includes two texts the work is based on, one that involves the LGBT terms we will be learning about, and another one with the ESCO definitions of transversal competences.

#### 2.5. Key competences for life-long learning

The European Project Task (2017) defines a competence as a mix of knowledge, abilities and attitudes which make you competent if you’re able to act well in certain situations and challenges. To be competent does not mean solely to know something or to have some notions about some topics, but also to put into practice the knowledge in a given context and situation. The European Union has identified 8 Key Competences that enable every citizen to adapt to changes of society. They are important for the personal fulfillment and development, for the working life, for studying and learning new things. Everyone should possess them, young people in training to get ready for the adult life, adult and senior people for Lifelong Learning in order to continuously improve knowledge. The 8 Key Competences are the following:

1. Communication in mother tongue



2. Communication in foreign language
3. Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology
4. Digital competence
5. Learning to learn
6. Social and civic competence
7. Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship
8. Cultural awareness and expression.

The strategy is focused on the Social and Civic competence. The social competence refers to personal, interpersonal and intercultural competence and all forms of behavior that equip individuals to participate in an effective and constructive way in social and working life. It is linked to personal and social well-being. An understanding of codes of conduct and customs in the different environments in which individuals operate is essential. Civic competence, and particularly knowledge of social and political concepts and structures (democracy, justice, equality, citizenship and civil rights), equips individuals to engage in active and democratic participation.

For Bonjean (2018) everyone has the right to quality and inclusive education, training and life-long learning in order to develop key competences and basic skills. Key competences and basic skills are needed by all for personal fulfilment and development, employability, social inclusion and active citizenship.

## 2.1.ESCO

ESCO (European Commission, 2019) (European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations) is the European multilingual classification of Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations. It's part of the Europe 2020 strategy. The ESCO classification identifies and categorizes skills, competences, qualifications and occupations relevant for the EU labor market and education and training. It systematically shows the relationships between the different concepts.

ESCO works as a dictionary, describing, identifying and classifying professional occupations, skills, and qualifications relevant for the EU labor market and education and training. Those concepts and the relationships between them can be understood by

electronic systems, which allows different online platforms to use ESCO for services like matching jobseekers to jobs on the basis of their skills, suggesting trainings to people who want to reskill or upskill etc. It also provides descriptions of 2942 occupations and 13.485 skills linked to these occupations, translated into 27 languages (all official EU languages plus Icelandic, Norwegian and Arabic). Over time, it will also display the qualifications awarded in the education and training systems from Member States, as well as qualifications issued by private awarding bodies.

The aim of ESCO is to support job mobility across Europe and therefore a more integrated and efficient labor market, by offering a “common language” on occupations and skills that can be used by different stakeholders on employment and education and training topics.

## 2.2. Transversal competences:

ESCO (European Commission, 2019) defines a competence as the development capacity to mobilize interactively and use information, data, knowledge, ability, values, attitude and technology in an ethical way in order to participate effectively and act in different contexts in the twenty first century to achieve individual, collective and global good.

Transversal competences are the ones not typically considered as specifically related to a particular job, task, academic discipline or area of knowledge and that can be used in a wide variety of situations and work settings. The reason I’ll be focusing on competences, specifically on transversal ones is because they’re related with the social aspects of a job where we can work for inclusion.

## 2.3. Competences the strategy is focused on

The project is centered on working on transversal competences at the workplace. There are many transversal competences, but the strategy is focused on a selection of the ones that most suite inclusion, tolerance and teamwork the best.

These are the official transversal competences definitions approved by ESCO (2019), and an underline on why they are important for this inclusion strategy:

### 2.3.1. Work in teams

Work confidently within a group with each doing their part in the service of the whole.

Necessary to create a favorable climate with those involved in a network group. Make being part of the network a desirable thing to be.

### 2.3.2. Demonstrate consideration

Act in an understanding and supportive manner that is sensitive to others' needs and feelings.

If we see a situation in which a colleague is having a hard time, we should take action and report these behaviors. Allies are a crucial element of ensuring inclusion for all, they can help spread the message that diversity is celebrated in an organization.

### 2.3.3. Adapt to change

Alter one's attitude or behavior to accommodate modifications in the workplace.

Society is changing, traditional values aren't as important as they were. In this case it's not something new, diverse people have always existed, just that now society is learning to accept the differences

### 2.3.4. Support cultural diversity

Take an active role in promoting social justice and confronting discrimination in the workplace based on cultural identity.

People perform better when they can be themselves, it's important to look into making sure that lesbian, gay, bi and trans (LGBT) people are fully included in the workplace.

### 2.3.5. Demonstrate intercultural competence

Understand and respect people who are perceived to have different cultural affinities and respond effectively and respectfully to them.

We are all different so we must focus on this important skill and implement it with diversity.

#### 2.3.6. Support gender equality

Strive for equal benefit for both sexes by assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in all areas and at all levels in the workplace.

Vital for human rights so woman and men can share the same opportunities. This is especially important in the work world, where the wage gap is still present among other complications men don't face.

#### 2.3.7. Interact with others

Engage with others face-to-face in a wide range of situations, using strategies appropriate to context and purpose. May include formal or informal conversation, meeting, transactions, information exchange.

A good environment helps working in teams and assures better results. It's important to avoid discrimination by ensuring a healthy work space.

#### 2.3.8. Support colleagues

Guide or help less experienced or less knowledgeable people at work. For LGBT workers, it's vital to have allies in the workplace. Especially for certain groups within the LGBT community. According to People Management (2018) the chances of suffering discrimination and abuse are significantly higher for transgender people. One in eight were physically attacked by colleagues or customers in the last year, and 12 per cent lost a job because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Having support will benefit the situation.

#### 2.3.9. Develop strategies to solve problems

Develop specific goals and plans to prioritize, organize, and accomplish work. It's particularly important for employers or people in charge to develop strategies solve problems having to do with this matter to achieve cohabitation and harmony. Consulting employees, both LGBT and non-LGBT about what inclusion looks like in your organization will help ensure your strategy. It's appropriate for all staff to share your vision.

### 3. Strategy: workshop for LGBT inclusion. Anti-bullying seminar

Workshops are a very effective way of reaching out to people for educational purposes. It's a great way for someone to learn about a subject and educate for inclusion. Attending workshops can help workers achieve success in their academic environment by putting the learned competences into practice.

Transversal competences in the labor world assure colleagues working together, helping each other out and adapting to changes in societies beliefs and social conceptions. They create a cooperation dynamic to assure a good atmosphere where communication is focused on listening and understanding. Simultaneously, if workers acquire them, they'll improve perception and observation techniques adding benefits to a fully trained professional, with technological, language, leadership and creativity skills, encouraging working in teams and logical reasoning.

One of the main goals is to raise awareness about discrimination, and for workers to resort to non-discrimination policies if necessary. A worker who doesn't have conflicts, unnecessary stress caused by fear or insecurity will show better results than one in a complicated situation. If a person doesn't feel welcome or suffers bullying, the way they

work will be affected. Companies and employers should have non-discrimination policies in order to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and include gender identity.

These are some steps to take to make the workplace a better place for LGBT people.

A good nondiscrimination policy should include:

- Specifics about non-allowed behavior.
- A description of the penalties for violating the policy.
- A clear protocol for an employee who has experienced discrimination.
- Clear terms that discrimination will not be accepted.
- Investigation and action of complaints of discrimination.

### 3.1. Main goals

- Educating and sensitizing workers about sexual diversity and gender identity as a matter of human rights.
- Educating on the importance of Transversal competences at the workplace.
- Showing the entrenched prejudice system and its consequences in the possible exclusion of their colleagues.
- Sensitizing about the transcendence of exclusionary behavior.
- Clarifying concepts and help the use of non-sexist or discriminatory language.
- Offering images and positive life experiences about diversity.
- Encouraging affirmation, trust and positive feelings as well as offering support to workers in situations of harassment or concealment of their identity or sexual orientation or to those who suffer pressure for their public statement.

### 3.2. Addressees

The attenders are workers, so we'll be teaching adults. When working with people in this age group it's important to consider specific pedagogical principles:

According to Lindeman (1926), adult education is a cooperative venture in non-authoritarian, informal learning. The principals he set said:

- education is a life-long process
- adult education is non-vocational
- adult education should emphasize situations, not subjects
- adult education should place primary emphasis on the learner's experiences.

Adults are motivated by needs and their learning mode is centered on reality, so the workshop must be built not on issues but on situations. Also, personality differences and entrenched beliefs increase with age; therefore, we must consider their will be opinion clash and different learning rhythms.

### 3.3. Stages

First stage: Investigating and adapting the workshop depending on the work space we'll attend.

Second stage: Program development sessions.

Final stage: Evaluation and self-assessment of the programs.

### 3.4. Methodology

The main objective is to involve the participants through different techniques and moments in a participatory approach, with the intention to clarify the concepts and promote the use of non-sexist language and respectful behavior towards diversity based on empathy.

The educator should adjust the examples and the teaching resources depending on the work field, it won't be the same working with people in healthcare or police officers.

Working with adults, we must keep in mind that some aspects will be easier to debate about, but at the same time people in this group of age have entrenched beliefs and might be less tolerant or harder to work with.

The idea of respect for the varied manifestations of diversity and identity must be promoted, to present positive life examples and give LGBT workers confidence and offer them support so they don't have to keep their orientation or identity hidden due to distrust of the environment, to those who have made their situation public and may be in a compromised situation or those who simply haven't defined towards any sexual orientation.

### 3.5. Contents and activities

Anti-Bullying Seminar:

Phases:

- Opening presentation
- Clarifying concepts
- Transversal Competences Group Dynamic

To start the session, before introducing ourselves, we have everyone write down an email and a telephone number for possible doubts they may have after the workshop.

We continue with the first images of the Power Point:

Who are we?

Why are we here?

What are Transversal competences?

The next image is a concentration camp, where prisoners are marked with a pink triangle, imprisoned for their sexual orientation. It is a good image to attract the groups attention: it creates high impact and represents how necessary it is to work for inclusion, human rights and to show the social equality LGBT people struggle for.

In the next slide, we ask the participants what terms they hear to refer to LGBT people, whether it is on television, in class, at home with the intention to analyze which words are correct and which are not. Then we explain what homophobia is and emphasize the fact that when we use these negative words (e.g, fagot, tranny or dyke) we are being homophobic, we use them with a negative connotation and they can do a lot of damage. We take this opportunity to analyze situations in which people use them and where they hear them to create awareness.

In the next phase, we will clarify concepts:

Does anyone know the difference between sex and gender?

We review concepts that are often confused, so we can understand the workshop better:

- Sex



- Gender identity
- Desire orientation
- Gender expression

People tend to confuse concepts with others, that's why it's important to have resources and examples to be able to explain it several times if necessary.

Some transsexual people don't like to talk about their past, and it might be uncomfortable for them if you ask what their previous name was

How should we refer to the person? masculine or feminine transsexual

Once they understand sex, gender and sexual orientation, we clarify other concepts:

- Transvestite
- Transsexual
- Transgender
- Male transsexual
- Female transsexual

It often generates many doubts because of the great ignorance society has. We start with the example, that could be the vast majority of people cross dressing for carnival or Halloween. It has nothing to do with your sexual orientation, it is independent. The same example works for transgender and transsexual people. We highlight the importance of not confusing gender identity and sexual orientation.

Some frequent doubts:

- If you dress as a girl / boy do you automatically like people of your same sex?
- Does a transsexual person still have the sexual organs he or she was born with?
- Difference between a trans man / woman.

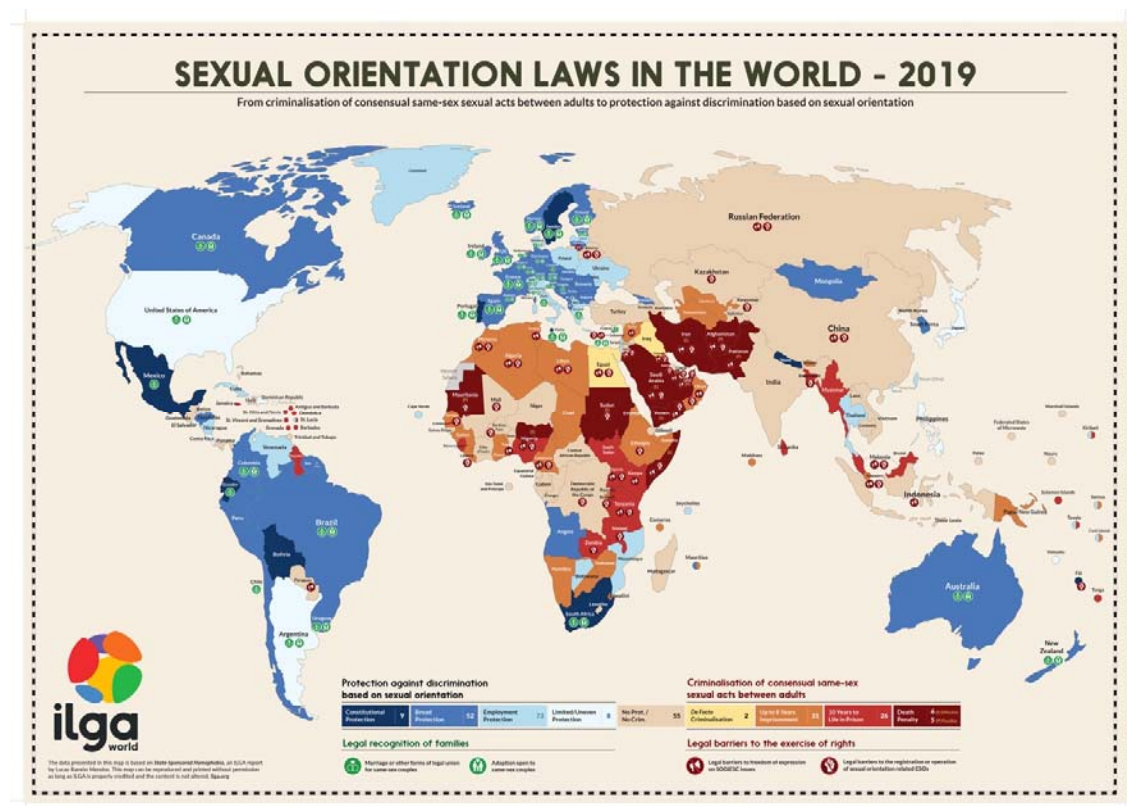
To answer these questions, we must first show the importance of treating a person as they want us to treat them, in the way that makes them feel comfortable.

Examples:

- If you were painted a mustache on (being a girl) would you be attracted by the same people? Your clothes do not condition your sexual orientation.

- If in an accident you lost your genitals, would people treat you differently? When we talk to a person, we talk the person, despite their sexual organs. There are guys with vulva and girls with penis and it's something we have to accept.
- People tend to confuse masculine / feminine trans terms to be the sex with which they were born, when it is the opposite. Always talk to the person as you want them to be treated.

Next, we analyze the worldwide social situation by examining the ILGA map:



Source: ILGA Sexual Orientation Laws

Transversal Competences:

What are transversal competences?

Can you name any?

Open a debate:

Why are they important for employability?

Group Dynamics to work Transversal Competences:

*Work in teams*

Tie a pen to four strings so participants in groups of four can write a word together. First, they should choose a word that represents working in teams, such as cooperation, leadership, equality... and work together to write it down on a piece of paper. It seems quite simple, but something so basic can help settle problems when it comes to solving them in a group.

*Demonstrate consideration*

Opening a debate is a great way of sharing opinions and revising negative behavior.

This dynamic starts out showing an article in the paper, for example:

A transsexual employee is fired from the gas station where he worked after revealing his gender identity.

The worker passed a 15-day test phase at the gas station but only lasted two weekends at his workplace, being fired after submitting his ID with the identity of a woman to formalize the contract. (El Mundo, 2019)

Look and analyze the news:

- What would you do if you saw this situation?
- What is your opinion?

Ideas we can work with:

- Don't assume a person's sex by the way they look

*Adapt to change*

This dynamic works with stereotypes and prejudice, in order to eliminate them. Times are changing and this exercise helps adapt to new times and open peoples mind to think outside of what we've been taught.

Two volunteers leave the room, and the educator walks out with them and tells them to come back in and have a conversation about their weekend. Then the educator walks in and tells the rest of the group that they have to guess which one is gay/lesbian/trans and which one is heterosexual. Neither the volunteers nor the rest of the group know what's going on exactly. When the group tries to guess, we can analyze all stereotypes and preconceptions people have about the LGBT community.

#### *Support cultural diversity*

To support cultural diversity, we'll talk about the diverse family to question the traditional family being the only one that is accepted, pointing out that all families are equal.

Some questions used:

What do you consider a family?

What's the most important thing that defines a family?

Could a single mom/dad or same sex couples be family?

#### *Demonstrate intercultural competence*

Multi-cultural cooking is a dynamic that works to bring cultures together. The main goal is to share recipes from different countries in order to accept differences with a daily activity everyone practices. The activity starts with a question:

What's the most famous Spanish food?

The main reason why we ask this question is to think about where the ingredients come from. Spanish omelet, one of the most famous dishes is made with potatoes, which are originally brought from America. This makes participants question ethnocentrism, what we thought was Spanish is actually not ours.

To finish the activity, we share different recipes with the rest of the group.

#### *Support gender equality*

Roles and gender Stereotypes in publicity: In the first part of the activity sexist advertising images from previous years are shown to the group:

What do you see?

Do you think that society has changed?

To continue, we display sexist advertisement from the present, in order to show the current situation.

Despite the progress in equality for which woman have been fighting for in recent years, we continue to see that gender roles and stereotypes that we thought had disappeared, that are continuously repeated in advertising in our days. Advertising is a reflection of our society in which consumption is based, and the inequality between women and men is fed. We want to show that these stereotypes aren't real. Something we also want to highlight is the scarce appearance of people who are not CIS and heterosexuals.

- Goals:

Questioning typical gender roles and stereotypes of our society that are expressed through publicity, encouraging participants critical thinking through images and a further debate.

- Role of the educator

Achieve the involvement and interest of participants through questions that try to go beyond what is seen in the images.

### *Interact with others*

The goal is to raise awareness about being respectful to everyone you work with. Give others a chance to talk, listening is the most important part of interacting well with colleagues. Don't say or do anything insulting, respect differences, and focus on empathy to treat them the way that you would want to be treated.

### *Support colleagues*

Show the participants the different action protocols in case they witness an act of discrimination, so they have the means to act and support colleagues in difficult situations.

### *Develop strategies to solve problem*

We present an enigma for the group to solve together, this will also develop working in teams.

### 3.6. Timeline

Session timeline (60 minutes)

Introduction: (10 minutes)

Clarifying concepts (20 minutes)

Transversal competences Dynamic (25 minutes)

Evaluation and solving questions (5-10 minutes)

### 3.7. Educational resources

#### *Material resources*

The talks are developed with self-made Power-Point exhibitions. We also provide and indicate the existence of various educational materials for the staff (workshops, lectures, videos, books), all of them available on-line and both in Spanish language and in English. It also has a list of readings from children's stories to adult reading if the center staff requires it.

#### *Human resources*

Two Social Educators with their corresponding hour wage, according to the agreement.

#### *Financial Resources*

Transportation costs.

### 3.8. Evaluation

The intention the SWOT Analysis has is to examine the environment and susceptibility the project has. The methodology is based on internal assessment, and shows the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

### *Strengths*

- The project will assure workers with new social skills.
- Making a healthier workplace.
- Encouraging team work and better results.

### *Weaknesses*

- Adults not having the obligation to attend the workshop.
- Participants not paying attention or ignoring the importance of the workshop.

### *Opportunities*

- The opportunity to work with an age group that's not easily accessible.
- Making a change towards inclusive and tolerant behavior.
- Informing about the action protocol for discrimination cases.
- Teaching Transversal Competences at work.

### *Threats*

- Possible lack of interest or motivation. Participants will be encouraged to take action and be part of the workshop.
- Non-continuity of the project in the future. Staying in touch with the work center and being accessible in case there is a problem can solve this threat.





## 4. Conclusions and recommendations

Having examined the social situation, I believe it's absolutely necessary to keep on fighting for LGBT inclusion. Times are changing and social beliefs are as well, directly regarding religious and social norms that has created an entrenched generational gap even in the most accepting societies. This generation is responsible to end the struggle lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people are living to achieve their rights, in order to achieve greater levels of equality and inclusiveness.

Even though things have changed and society is more accepting, in 2016 we witnessed the most violent killing of LGBT people in the Western world since the Holocaust. This happened in Orlando, Florida. Sriskandarajah (2016) highlights that despite being a cruel reminder of the persistent persecution, these deaths are only the latest in a devastating catalog of documented abuses and murders against LGBT people around the world. Reality confirms that there is no place on the planet where LGBT people are free from discrimination and violence.

FELGBT (2018) reported that homosexuality continues to be illegal in 75 countries, in six of them punishable by death. In countries such as Belize and India, homosexuality has recently been outlawed and, in recent years, Russia, Nigeria and Uganda have introduced fierce laws against the LGBT community. In 2015, Amnesty International noted a decrease

in the legal rights of LGBTI people in the African continent. Even in countries with progressive legal frameworks, such as South Africa, social acceptance is limited and levels of violence remain high.

Transgender people live a more complicated and dangerous situation in their daily life. The same study reveals almost 70% of the 70 people FELGBT interviewed had received insults in recent time, 31% were harassed and 42% of them suffered denial of access to work. In addition, it shows that 16% were victims of sexual assault or abuse, while 9% suffered violence with injuries and 12% violence without injuries. On the other hand, 19% admitted having suffered discrimination when accessing health services, 31% having suffered it when trying to access other types of services. This evidence is proof that Spanish society still suffers from transphobia for which it does not help at all that our current legislation continues to consider trans people as a “disease” despite the fact that the World Health Organization removed transsexuality from the list of mental disorders in 2018. There are many discriminations that transsexual people face at school, work, healthcare.

Companies do not yet have action protocols to follow in case of discrimination. Many of these cases will go unnoticed and unpunished. That is why it's indispensable to work with inclusive competences to avoid these cases and encounter the lack of information and means.

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