



# OVER THE RAINBOW

A practical booklet about setting up international LesBiGay projects - including young lesbians, gays, bisexuals and young people questioning their sexual orientation

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SALTO-YOUTH  
INCLUSION  
RESOURCE CENTRE



# OVER THE RAINBOW



## SALTO-YOUTH STANDS FOR...

...‘Support and Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities within the Youth in Action programme’. The European Commission has created a network of eight SALTO-YOUTH Resource Centres to enhance the implementation of the European Youth in Action programme which provides young people with valuable non-formal learning experiences.

SALTO’s aim is to **support European Youth in Action projects** in priority areas such as European Citizenship, Cultural Diversity, Participation and Inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities, in regions such as EuroMed, South-East Europe or Eastern Europe and the Caucasus, with Training and Cooperation activities and with Information tools for National Agencies.

In these European priority areas, SALTO-YOUTH provides **resources, information and training** for National Agencies and European youth workers. Several resources in the above areas are available at [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net). Find online the European Training Calendar, the Toolbox for Training and Youth Work, Trainers Online for Youth, links to online resources and much more...

SALTO-YOUTH actively **co-operates** with other actors in European youth work such as the National Agencies of the Youth in Action programme, the Council of Europe, the European Youth Forum, European youth workers and trainers and training organisers.

## THE SALTO-YOUTH INCLUSION RESOURCE CENTRE [WWW.SALTO-YOUTH.NET/INCLUSION/](http://WWW.SALTO-YOUTH.NET/INCLUSION/)

The SALTO Inclusion Resource Centre (in Belgium-Flanders) works together with the European Commission to **include young people with fewer opportunities** in the Youth in Action programme. SALTO-Inclusion also supports the National Agencies and youth workers in their inclusion work by providing the following resources:

- training courses on inclusion topics and for specific target groups at risk of social exclusion
- training and youth work methods and tools to support inclusion projects
- practical and inspiring publications for international inclusion projects
- up-to-date information on inclusion issues and opportunities via the Inclusion Newsletter
- handy annotated links to inclusion resources online
- an overview of trainers and resource persons in the field of inclusion and youth
- bringing together stakeholders to make the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities more effective and easier

For more information and resources, have a look at the Inclusion pages at

 [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Inclusion/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Inclusion/)

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# INTRO THE CASE FOR

# LESBIGAY YOUTH WORK

The SALTO-YOUTH Inclusion Resource Centre's mission is to stimulate **Inclusion of ALL young people** within the European Union's Youth in Action programme. However, not all young people get the opportunity to take part in international youth work. The YiA programme does not reach a variety of target groups who face obstacles to participate in these projects.

👉 Read more about the Youth in Action programme on page 59.

One of the underrepresented or invisible groups in European youth projects are **Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual (LesBiGay) youth** and those questioning their sexual orientation. Even though LesBiGay people constitute an estimated 10% of society (give or take a few percent), most programme countries do not reach this percentage of youth projects that aim to include or target LesBiGay youth.



*from olleke.be*

Young people with a sexual orientation differing from the majority could unquestionably **benefit from international projects**. Young people that are struggling with their homosexual or bisexual orientation often face isolation in a hetero-dominated environment. In some countries, regions and religions, homophobia and intolerance puts a strain on young people's **identity-building**. Youth projects organised together with other LesBiGay young people could break this isolation and show them they are not alone. A youth project that is organised in a safe environment can help young people come to terms with their sexual orientation and identity.

In the light of recent negative publicity in certain countries (e.g. regarding same-sex partnership laws, gay priests, execution and arrests of young homosexuals etc.), international (youth) projects can help spread a **positive image** of the LesBiGay community, which in turn could contribute to the eradication of discrimination and intolerance. Positive contact with young LesBiGay people (e.g. through a youth project) can change people's **stereotypes and prejudices**. International partnership and co-operation between different LesBiGay organisations can stimulate and enrich their members and advocacy work in their respective contexts.

👉 Read more about the benefits of international LesBiGay projects on page 12.

By making the invisible LesBiGay minority more **visible**, also in the European Union's Youth in Action programme and its projects, a greater tolerance might be developed towards LesBiGay persons. ALL young people should have the **same opportunities** and be treated the same way, regardless of gender, ethnicity, (dis)ability, economic power, social situation, educational level, geographical location, religion or sexual orientation (Amsterdam Treaty of the European Union).

👉 This is why, in 2005, the SALTO Inclusion Resource Centre organised the **Rainbow training course** for youth workers working with LesBiGay youth. The course aimed at giving information on setting up international projects with this target group.

See [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/TCrainbow/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/TCrainbow/)

The "Over the Rainbow" booklet is based on this SALTO TC Rainbow and aims to **support youth workers** (regardless of their own sexual orientation) working with LesBiGay youth as they take a look *over the rainbow* when organising international LesBiGay youth projects. This booklet gives youth workers **practical resources** and **tips & tricks** that make it easier for them to go international. It addresses the specifics of working with LesBiGay youth in an international context.

**Generalist youth workers**, who are confronted with young LesBiGays in their group, can also find tips in this booklet on how to deal with the specific issues these young people face.

👉 Read the chapter on dealing with LesBiGay issues on page 66.

Organising LGBT activities is a task that requires a **variety of skills and knowledge**. It does not differ from the organisation of any other project, requiring a high degree of competence in project management. This booklet will not focus on details relating to the management of your project, but will take a look at the international project from a LesBiGay perspective.

- 👉 You can find more about **Project Management** in the SALTO Project Management Handbook or in the Training-Kit on Project Management: download them from [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/toolbox/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/toolbox/) or [www.youth-partnership.net](http://www.youth-partnership.net)

### WHAT'S IN A WORD? LABELS & TERMINOLOGY

There are a variety of ways to refer to people of differing sexual orientation. The term **sexuality incorporates more than just sex**: it refers to emotional needs, sexual fantasies, sexual/gender identity as well as sexual activity and behaviour. Each person, of either sexual inclination, has a different composition of these elements, and has the right to be who they are. One thing is sure: **working with sexuality requires sensitivity!**

The earliest organisations that dealt with issues of non-majoritarian sexual orientation were “**Lesbian & Gay**” organisations. Many of these organisations still retain this heritage in their respective titles e.g. ILGA.org (*International Lesbian & Gay Association*), IGLYO.com (*International Gay & Lesbian Youth Organisation*), PFLAG.org (*Parents, Family & Friends of Lesbians And Gays*) etc.

Nonetheless, the world is neither completely black nor white, but is painted in each and every colour of the rainbow. For this reason many organisations and forums/platforms began to place **bisexuality** (being sexually oriented toward both sexes) and homosexuality (being sexually attracted to people of the same sex) side by side. This added the letter B to the L & G abbreviations.

More recently, **transgendered people** (transsexuality, where gender identity differs from one's biological sex) have come to the forefront and have joined forces with the LGB organisations to fight for their right to be who they are. This development added a T to the earlier LGB movement. Currently it is being considered whether the letter I should be added to the LGBT movement in order to include **intersexuality**: people who have sexual characteristics of both sexes and as a result face problems of acceptance in society.



Alternatively, certain groups adopted the term **Queer** to refer to all gender identities and sexual orientations outside the societal norm with regard to gender, sexual orientation, love, relationships and lifestyle. Sometimes the term Queer has replaced the letters LGBT(I) while in other instances has been added to the abbreviation as in LGBTQ. For example, IGLYO.com adopted as its full name “International Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Youth and Student Organization”.

More about **gender identity and sexual orientation** in the following publications

- 👉 **”Belongings”** (Swedish LGBT federation) downloadable from [www.RFSLungdom.se/?p=1832](http://www.RFSLungdom.se/?p=1832)
- 👉 **“Different in More Ways Than One** – providing guidance for teenagers on their way to identity, sexuality and respect” (European Co-operation Project For Diversity Against Discrimination) – downloadable from [www.diversity-in-europe.org](http://www.diversity-in-europe.org) > click Background Theory

**“Over the Rainbow”** focuses on issues that are confronted by young people with a sexual orientation that falls outside the “heterosexual norm”. Such issues include coming-out, confidentiality, sexual health, the situation of LesBiGays in different countries, the gay & lesbian scene, relations between different groups, etc. In this booklet we will be talking of **LesBiGay youth** (as in French, or as HoLeBi in Dutch). By using the term LesBiGay the text is easier to read. LGBT(I/Q) is only used when referring to other organisations and to the Queer/LGBT movement in general.

You might have noticed that the letter **T** was not used in the title of this booklet. This is because transgendered people face very specific issues (e.g. hormonal treatments, sex change operations, legal and medical issues, etc.) which are not discussed in this booklet. Nevertheless, **“Over the Rainbow”** is **relevant to transgendered young people**, as many of the LesBiGay issues discussed in this publication are similar to some of the issues faced by transsexuals. The elements contained in this booklet can be easily adapted in order to organise international youth projects for transgendered young people, to create greater tolerance and acceptance, and can be used by transgender organisations to mutually enrich each other’s work.

We do realise that any label or word we use (e.g. LesBiGay), may include some people and exclude others. Therefore, we also suggest that you **raise awareness about the different terminology** you use with the young people in your group or with your partner group(s). Different people or organisations prefer different words (as mentioned in the LGBTIQ description above). Some words may be considered offensive in certain contexts (e.g. fag, queen, butch, etc.); but can be also used in a humorous or revindicative way by people of that group.

During the TC Rainbow we did the following exercise to **raise awareness about politically correct terminology** and the risk of exaggeration ;-)

#### Politically correct fairytales

Take a classical children's fairytale, and try to come up with a politically correct version of the story by avoiding any gender assumptions, ageism, racism, disablism and especially heteronormativity (for the purpose of our topic). Ask people to read out their different versions of the (same or different) fairytale. Some questions for debriefing afterwards:

- How do people feel when using negative assumptions?
- Is it easy to avoid assumptions about gender, disability, race, religion, sexual orientation?
- Is it easy or useful to find politically correct alternatives? Why (not)?
- Do we all have the same reactions to the assumptions that are made in politically (in)correct terms or phrases?
- What can we learn from this exercise and discussion?



*from SALTO TC Rainbow*

### An Example: Little Red Riding Hood

*Based on Politically Correct Bedtime Stories by James Finn Garner (1994)*

There once was a *young person* named Red Riding Hood who lived with her mother on the edge of the forest. One day her mother asked her to take a basket of fruit to her grandmother's house - *not because this was women's work, mind you, but because she was an altruistic person*. Furthermore, her grandmother was not sick, but rather was in *full physical and mental health and was fully capable of taking care of herself as a mature adult*.

So Red Riding Hood set off with her basket through the woods. Many people believed that the forest was a *threatening and dangerous* place and never set foot in it. Red Riding Hood, however, was *confident enough in her own growing sexuality and such obvious Freudian imagery did not intimidate her*.

On the way to Grandma's house, Red Riding Hood was accosted by a wolf who asked her what was in her basket. She replied, "Some fruits for my grandmother, *who is certainly capable of taking care of herself as a mature adult*." The wolf said, "You know, my dear, it isn't safe for a little girl to walk through these woods alone."

Red Riding Hood said, "I find your *sexist remark* offensive in the extreme, but I will ignore it because of your *traditional status as an outcast from society*, the stress of which has caused you to develop your own, entirely valid, worldview. Now, if you'll excuse me, I must be on my way."

Red Riding Hood walked on along the main path. But, because his status outside society had freed him from *unoriginal adherence to linear, Western-style thought*, the wolf knew a quicker route to Grandma's house. He burst into the house and ate Grandma, an entirely valid course of action for a *carnivore* such as himself. Then, *free from rigid, traditionalist notions of what was masculine or feminine*, he put on Grandma's nightclothes and crawled into bed.

Red Riding Hood entered the cottage and said, "Grandma, I have brought you some nice snacks."

From the bed, the wolf said softly, "Come closer, child, so that I might see you." Red Riding Hood said, "Oh, I forgot you are as *optically challenged as a bat*. Grandma, what big eyes you have!" The wolf replied "They have seen much, and forgiven much, my dear." Red Riding Hood continued: "Grandma, what big teeth you have!"

The wolf said, *“I am happy with who I am and what I am,”* and leaped out of bed. He grabbed Red Riding Hood in his claws, intent on devouring her. Red Riding Hood screamed, not out of alarm at the *wolf’s apparent tendency toward cross-dressing*, but because of his wilful invasion of her personal space.

Her screams were heard by a passing *woodchopper-person* (or log-fuel technician, as he preferred to be called). When he burst into the cottage, he saw the fight and tried to intervene. But as he raised his axe, Red Riding Hood and the wolf both stopped. *“And just what do you think you’re doing?”* asked Red Riding Hood. The *woodchopper-person* blinked and tried to answer, but no words came to him.

*“Bursting in here like a Neanderthal, trusting your weapon to do your thinking for you!”* she exclaimed. *“Sexist! Speciesist! How dare you assume that women and wolves can’t solve their own problems without a man’s help!”*

When she heard Red Riding Hood’s impassioned speech, Grandma jumped out of the wolf’s mouth, seized the woodchopper-person’s axe, and cut his head off. After this ordeal, Red Riding Hood, Grandma, and the wolf felt a certain commonality of purpose. They decided to set up an *alternative household based on mutual respect and co-operation*, and they lived together in the woods happily ever after.

### WHY GO INTERNATIONAL WITH LESBIGAY YOUTH?

There are a variety of (youth) organisations on a **local level** that work with lesbian, gay and bisexual youth. They organise many interesting activities that help young LesBiGays discover their own identity and meet similar young people in their area. LGBT organisations are constantly fighting for equality and human rights in cities, regions and countries, and are undoubtedly doing great work.

However, there is an additional tool available for these organisations: **International LesBiGay youth projects**. Local youth work is vital, but international projects provide some additional benefits. A number of these benefits are identical for all young people, regardless of sexual orientation, but some are particularly valid for LesBiGay youth or organisations.

## BENEFITS FOR INDIVIDUAL LESBIGAY YOUNG PEOPLE

### Intercultural learning and widening horizons

- Through participation in international youth projects, young people **discover new cultures**, new people, new places, etc. They learn that their way of doing things is just one of many. Knowing that things can be done differently (e.g. in different countries) can stimulate young people's **creativity** to find new solutions to old challenges. It can also increase their **empathy** by trying to look at things from different perspectives.
- This is also valid for **LesBiGay life in general**. Through interaction with young LesBiGays from different countries or by visiting each others countries these young people get a closer look into other LesBiGay scenes, associations, role models and lifestyles, which may differ from their own. They are confronted with different approaches to social relationships, political involvement, etc., which could put their own way of doing things in **perspective** or generate **new ideas**.
- Through interaction with friends from different cultures young people build on their **inter-cultural competencies**. They learn not to judge (difference is not necessarily a bad thing) and how to deal with new situations on a cultural level. They also learn to react **positively to differences**.
- An introduction to different cultures and an acceptance of cultural difference often spill over into the **acceptance of difference regarding other (sub)groups** they come in contact with in daily life. For example, ethnic groups, persons with a disability or subgroups within the LGBT community.
- Through meeting LesBiGay youth from different countries and different walks of life young people learn to **diversify their own stereotypes** of what gays, lesbians and bisexual people are 'supposed' to be like. Through meeting various LesBiGays young people learn to choose an **identity or role model** that fits them best.



### Empowerment and self-confidence

- Participation in an international project and the creation of new friendships with other LesBiGay people in a similar situation as their own **breaks their isolation** as regards LesBiGay issues. Young people **exchange life stories** which make them reflect on their own reality, their own values and ideas. This is a great source of **personal development** and of inspiration for their personal lives.
- An international project should be a **safe environment** for young LesBiGay people to meet in. Being abroad in a different environment, moreover with other LesBiGay young people, could be a step towards one's **self acceptance and coming out** (to one's self, to new people abroad and maybe afterwards to people at home). Being with other young people 'like themselves' helps them shed the internalised hetero-norm and stimulate a **positive self-image and pride** in who they are.
- Participation in an (international) group with LesBiGay peers informs young people on **common LesBiGay references** such as literature, music, icons, historical figures, sex, etc. This is beneficial to create a **feeling of belonging** and of being part of the so-called **LesBiGay community**. The next step would then be to realise that there are also many differences between people who share the same sexual orientation.
- When meeting **positive peers** who are fighting for the same rights as themselves, or young activists abroad who are putting a lot of energy and motivation into their work, young people can receive **renewed energy** that they can apply to their own youth work. In this sense an international experience can be an **impulse for increased commitment** to LesBiGay issues (within their organisation or in general).
- Participation in an international youth project creates a space to **discuss LesBiGay issues** from different perspectives e.g. coming-out, love & heart-break, sexual growth & health, homophobia and discrimination, etc.
- And perhaps a European project – funded by the EU Youth in Action programme – also represents **prestige** for young people and **official acceptance** of their own sexual orientation.

### Developing new competencies

- Participants and youth workers in international projects gain a lot of **intercultural skills**, as we have already described above.
- On another level, young people engaging in international youth projects and who take on different responsibilities in the project **learn new skills** (international co-operation, project management, how to work in multicultural teams, language practice, etc.) that are useful for their **professional lives**.
- Participation in international projects might also have a **snowball effect** on young people's engagement in their LesBiGay organisation. International projects are a pleasant and motivating experience, and stimulate young people to take on (more) tasks and responsibilities in the organisation. Their **voluntary commitment** is a practical experience for their further career.



*from olleke.be*

- ★ Last but not least, one should not forget that an international project is also about **FUN**. The young participants have a pleasant experience abroad and often make new friends. A youth exchange or voluntary service abroad is an **enjoyable and rewarding alternative** to commercial holidays!

## BENEFITS OF GAY-STRAIGHT MIXED PROJECTS

One could perhaps argue that it is not a good idea to create a **LesBiGay ghetto**, where young LesBiGay people stick with their LesBiGay peers, where they prefer to purchase in LesBiGay shops, where they only go to LesBiGay bars or where they only take part in exclusively **LesBiGay youth projects**.

There are plenty of reasons (see Benefits above) in favour of organising projects where young LesBiGay people can be with LesBiGay peers with whom they feel comfortable and with whom they don't have to conceal a part of their identity. But there are also benefits to be had from **mixing young people**, both straight, gay or bi; it all depends on your aims.

- The young people that participate in gay-straight mixed projects **get to know** peers of another sexual orientation, have fun together and bit-by-bit learn to get over their **stereotypes**. Getting to know more LesBiGay young people aids in changing straight people's **perceptions** of the stereotypical feminine gay and butch lesbian. There is a lot more variety than this – as is the case amongst heterosexuals.
- Young heterosexuals can be **homophobic** because they do not know any homosexual peers. As a result it is often difficult to **relate to LesBiGay peers** because many have not had this opportunity before. Often their **perceptions** of homosexuality or bisexuality are biased due to negative media attention or intolerant religions. (International) youth projects can help young heterosexuals to see and appreciate the person behind the **LesBiGay label**.
- On the other hand it is sometimes difficult for young LesBiGays to feel **comfortable** talking to straight peers about their feelings, about love or sexuality because of **internalised heteronormativity**. By participating in an (international) project and having fun together, young people evolve towards a more relaxed and respectful relationship with each other.



from SALTO TC Rainbow



## BENEFITS FOR LESBIGAY ORGANISATIONS

### Profiling the organisation

- By being active on a European level, by receiving European funding (for your international projects) or by co-operating with organisations abroad you raise your organisation's **profile and visibility**. It will attract more **attention** (hopefully positive) from local authorities, from other potential sources of funding, from the media, etc.
- United we stand, divided we fall! When LesBiGay organisations co-operate (on an international as well as on a national level) they benefit from a **synergy effect** which is crucial for their **lobbying and advocacy work**. Statements or activities that span different European countries have more impact than in one country alone.
- International LesBiGay projects are a great **stimulation** for organisations to increase their commitment to **bigger issues in a wider context** than they would otherwise be dealing with e.g. a youth work organisation that develops a training session for schools, an organisation in a gay friendly country sets up a campaign against homophobia in other countries, improving the situation of LesBiGay asylum seekers, etc.

### Developing the organisation

- Contacts with different organisations and youth workers (abroad), through, for example, international youth activities, stimulate **new ideas**: for new projects, to inspire new working methods, to take fresh initiatives, to do things differently (or more efficiently). There is a great potential to **learn from one another**.
- Organising an international youth project is a great opportunity to develop **organisational and project management skills** within your organisation e.g. intercultural competence, international co-operation, etc. which can also aid in managing regular activities.
- Participation in projects with international partner organisations allows you to **compare** and to know how good a job you are doing. The exchange of **good practices** and the design of **common projects** may lead the youth organisations to rethink their youth work practices to better meet the needs of their target groups.
- Participation in an international project could be a **welcome change** regarding the type of work youth workers are doing. This variation (if not exaggerated) could motivate youth workers in their work.

## BENEFITS FOR SOCIETY

The setting up of an international youth project could be seen as a deed of **activism** or **coming-out** in itself. While organising your project, you will make contact with many people. Your LesBiGay project can turn the invisible minority into a **visible minority**: in your project's title, in application forms, while travelling, at the venue, etc. This might provoke reaction, but hopefully of a positive kind.

- Through your project heterosexuals (whom you meet along the way) will be confronted with difference and will have to react to it. It questions the **heterosexual norm** on seeing your group, as everybody will not have the same type of relationships, sexuality or families.
- Your international project contributes in combating people's **hetero-sexism** (the assumption that everybody is heterosexual e.g. in advertising, in school books, when inquiring about one's girlfriend/boyfriend, etc.). The aim however is not to create opposition, but rather **understanding and acceptance!**
- Hopefully you will have **positive contacts** with the people surrounding your project. This leads to **positive image-building** of LesBiGay people and do away with negative stereotypes or stupid associations (e.g. gays are paedophiles, homosexuality is a disease, etc.). People begin to **look beyond the label**. LesBiGay people are characterised by much more than their sexuality: they are also sons and daughters, they also have a profession, they also play sports, etc.

International projects can contribute in **claiming equal rights and in putting an end to discrimination**, which is also foreseen in European law (Directive 2000/78/EC). As is the case in respect of gender, racial/ethnic origin, religion/belief, disability and age, **sexual orientation** cannot be used as a basis for discrimination within the European Union.

👉 More on European **anti-discrimination campaigns and laws** at [www.stop-discrimination.info](http://www.stop-discrimination.info)

*The benefits derived from organising international activities are manifold (and we have probably forgotten to mention some of them). Hopefully, the above list will give you or your organisation some form of inspiration or motivation to go international with LesBiGay youth or to convince your board of management or those who give you funding to give it a go.*

## WHAT KEEPS ORGANISATIONS FROM GOING INTERNATIONAL?

If it is so beneficial to all involved why do **so few LesBiGay organisations** participate in international projects? Why are youth organisations so reluctant to engage in international projects? Very often, youth organisations spend a lot of time doing their day-to-day work, and have little time for planning and gaining new perspectives. But there are so many opportunities out there!

It is only when we understand the hurdles faced by youth organisations that we can take the opportunity to change this.

- **The first time is always awkward...** Youth workers or young people might not exactly know what international projects are all about, and they prefer not to risk it.
  - >>> One way of **catching the international bug** could be to participate in an international activity organised by some other organisation (find a list on page 40). By witnessing at first hand what an international project entails you gain **organisational hints** and more **confidence** to organise your own project. Otherwise you could search for an experienced partner for your project (see Partner finding and partnership building, page 44).
- **Money** could be a stumbling block. Many people are of the opinion that travelling and international projects cost a lot. Youth organisations might not be aware of the different funding opportunities.
  - >>> The advantage with youth projects is that **there is funding** available (see Funding on page 52). If you plan your fundraising well, your participants (and your organisation) will only have to pay a small contribution. You could also foresee a smaller contribution from young people who have less money. Alternatively, you can also opt for a lower-budget activity or participate in someone else's activity (find a list on page 40)



from SALTO TC Rainbow

- Another costly resource is **time**. Some young people might not be able to volunteer or participate due to time constraints because of work, study or other commitments. Youth workers are often afraid that an international youth project will take up too much time for a relatively small group of people.
  - >>> **Advance planning** and **good task division** could limit the amount of time people would need to spend on the project. There is of course a minimum preparation necessary (see Setting up International LesBiGay projects, page 22). Participation in an international LesBiGay youth project is virtually a **policy option** of the organisation but must be based on young people's needs (see Participation, page 31). The list of **benefits** (on page 12) could aid you in your decision whether to go international or not. The project may involve more people than the group going abroad. You can **involve a wider audience** in the preparation work, fundraising and when making contact with the other group abroad. In this way the project is relevant to the whole of the organisation and not just the lucky few who will be going abroad.
- Potential participants and youth workers might feel they have **poor language skills** which could hinder communication with youth workers and young people from other countries.
  - >>> An alternative would be that you organise your first project together with partners from countries who speak the **same or a similar language** e.g. Austria and Germany; Czech Republic and Slovakia; Spain and Portugal, etc. Within the EU Youth in Action programme there is a national agency in each programme country which has **information in the local language**.
- Not all organisations have **partners abroad**. It is important to find a good partner that you can trust.
  - >>> Partner requests or databases of potential partners are not enough to base a partnership and a project on, but they can be a first stepping stone. Your organisation can participate in **contact-making seminars** to meet potential partners or use **feasibility visits** or **job-shadowing** to get to know your partner organisation better (see page 46).
- Youth workers might feel **insecure** about what the situation in other countries is like, and whether it is **safe** to go there or whether **positive co-operation** is possible.
  - >>> In such cases, it is a good idea for the youth worker(s) to go on a **feasibility visit** to the partner group abroad (at your own expense or with YiA programme funding: see page 59). It could also be an option to participate in another activity in the country in question where you could meet your partner e.g. training courses, contact-making seminars, etc. (see page 46)

- Members of youth organisations find it difficult to commit themselves to an activity that is in certain instances planned **one year in advance**. It can be difficult to keep up one's **motivation** during the preparation process.
  - >>> You can **make the preparation fun and interesting**, give plenty of opportunities to make new contacts with partner groups, etc. It is important to **involve the young people** from the start so that it really becomes 'their project' (see page 32)
- If you are working with young LesBiGay people that are **under-age**, you will need to get authorisation from their parents, who might be reluctant to let their children participate in an international activity.
  - >>> Again our list of benefits (on page 12) might help convince parents to allow their children take part in your international project, under your **qualified leadership and responsibility**. You can also **involve parents** in the preparation of the project so they understand and value the experience for their children.
- Youth workers might not be comfortable dealing with certain issues that might arise in an international LesBiGay project: young people falling in love, dealing with a gay hostile environment, dealing with the media, etc. What are the **do's and don'ts**?
  - >>> We have listed in this booklet some of the **issues** that frequently arise in international LesBiGay projects and **suggestions** on how to deal with them (see Dealing with LesBiGay issues in international projects on page 66)
- LesBiGay youth **living in rural areas**, who might feel their areas have little to offer to young people from other countries, may pose a specific challenge.
  - >>> In this instance, you could invite people from similar rural regions to participate in the project or you could focus on the difference between urban and rural life by involving groups from different regions.
- In some countries, LesBiGay groups are **not formally registered** and this can create a problem when trying to access European funding. Some organisations are of the opinion that they are **too small** to take on such a 'big and expensive' international project.
  - >>> **Informal youth groups** are also eligible to get funding in certain instances (see page 52). Alternatively, you can **combine forces** with other organisations in your country (who may be officially registered) and organise the project in **partnership** (see page 46).
- Some organisations do **not exclusively work on LesBiGay issues**; some are mainstream organisations that give special attention or organise projects about/for/with LesBiGay members.
  - >>> You could identify partners with **similar interests and a similar composition** of LesBiGay and heterosexual members (see page 45).

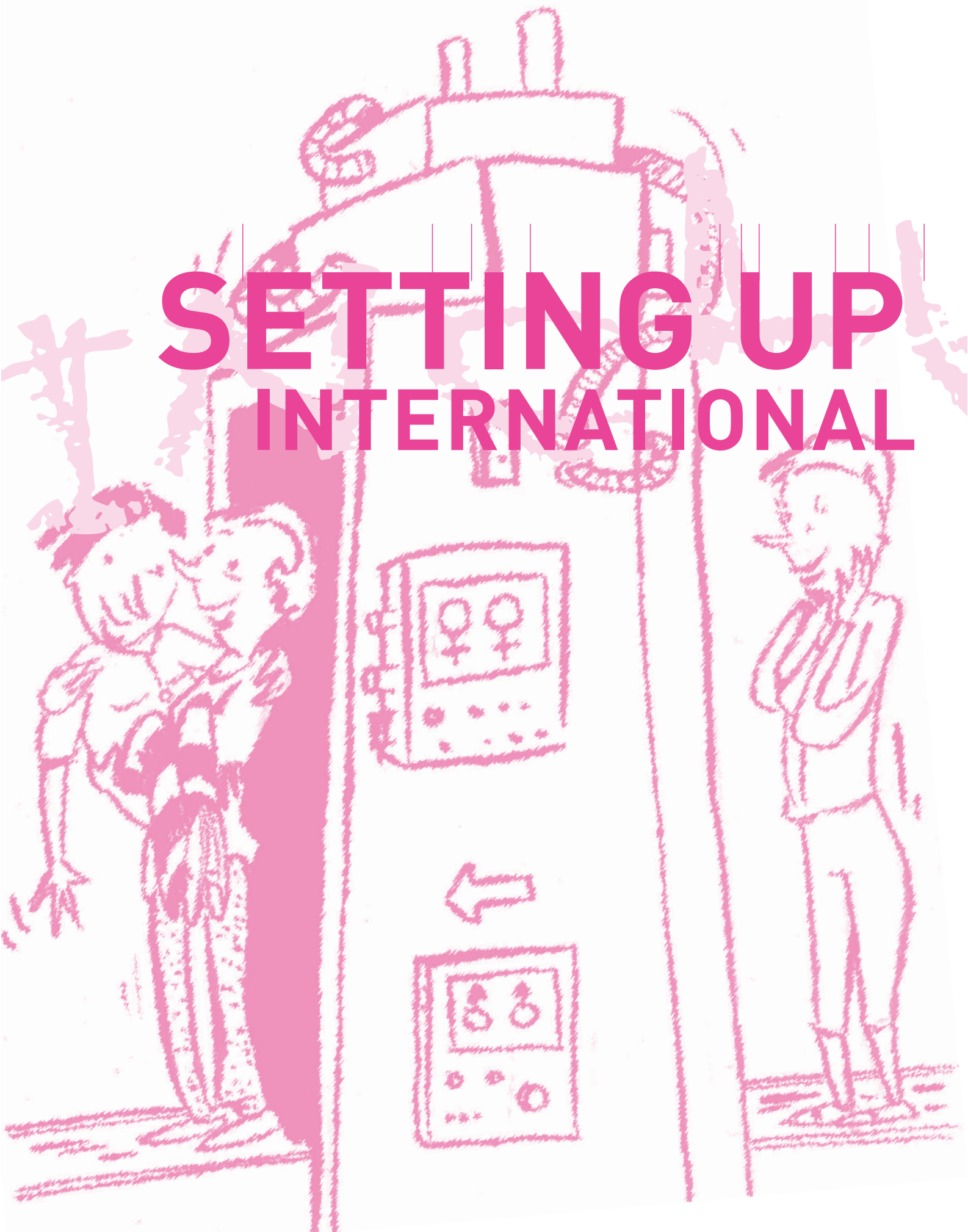
### Exercise: Green Lights – Red Lights

Together with the young members of your organisation (or with your board of management) try to identify as many “Green Lights” as possible for a potential international project, i.e. what the benefits of doing such an international youth project would be. Next, try to find as many “Red Lights” as possible for potential international projects, i.e. what are the possible negative consequences of going abroad with a group of young people. You could place the Green Lights on one side of the wall and the Red Lights on the other side. As a last step try to turn the Red Lights into Green Lights by looking at them from different perspectives.

- e.g. a board member might look at a youth exchange programme as a waste of time, a youth worker might see it as providing new services or activities for the young people, and the young people might see it as an extra reason for becoming more active in the organisation
- e.g. if you think parents are of the opinion that an international project is a risk for their son/daughter due to them being away from home, the youth worker could present the project as a cultural learning experience and as an exercise in social responsibility.



# SETTING UP INTERNATIONAL



# FOUNDATION LESBIGAY PROJECTS

Setting up a project is like building a pyramid. You first have to choose the place where you will build your project-pyramid – what **needs** do you want to address? – what will the project be about? It's only after you come to an agreement about the site you want to build on that you can start laying the foundation of your project-pyramid.

At the basis of every project there needs to be a fair deal of **planning**: imagining, together with other stakeholders, what the project should achieve and what it should look like. It pretty much depends on your **aims** as regards how you will approach your project and what types of projects are more suitable to achieve those aims.

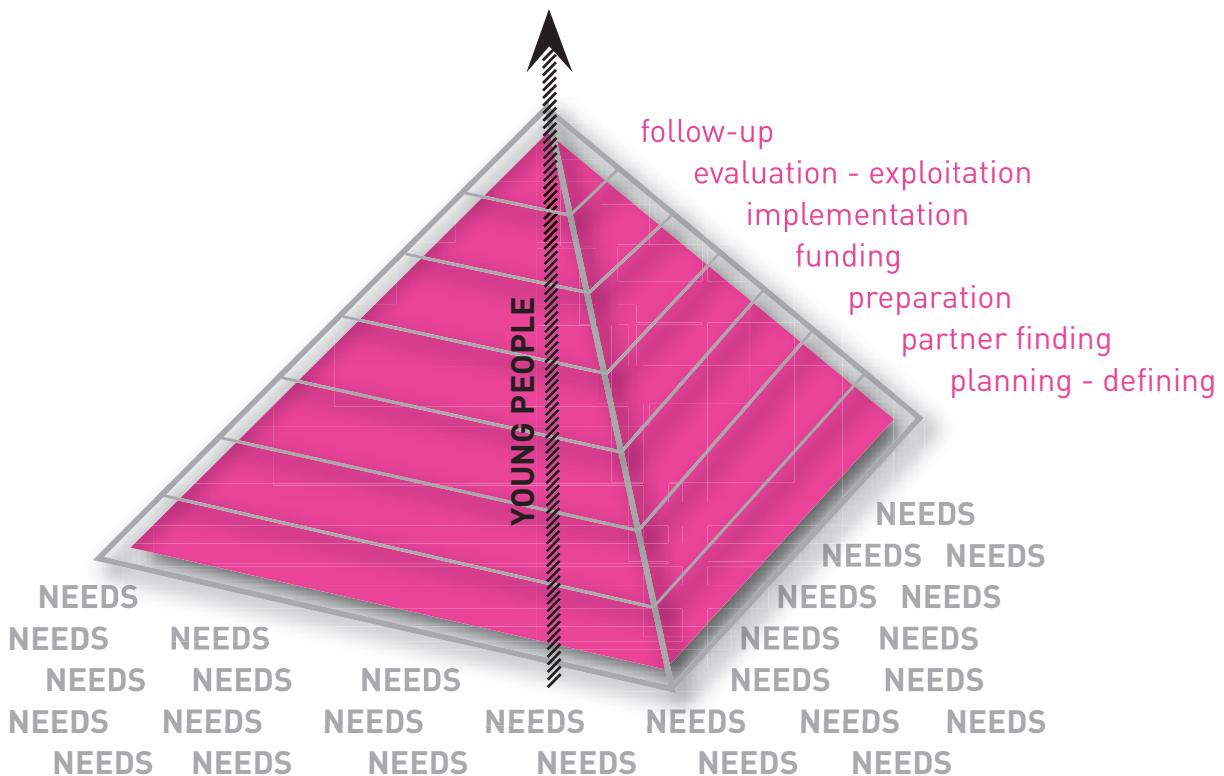
Since we are discussing international projects in this booklet, it goes without saying that at a certain stage you will have to **look for partners** abroad who would be interested in your project idea. It's only then that you can move forward to the more concrete and narrow parts of the project-pyramid, in order to **prepare the actual project** together with your partner group(s) – part of which is also ensuring sufficient **funding**.

When the finances are in order and the partners have fully prepared their project together, you arrive at the moment when you must **carry out the project**. This should not only be a pleasant experience for all involved, but also an effective one. If your project set out to change something or address a need, you would probably also want to **evaluate** if you have reached these goals. And perhaps you don't only want to prove to yourself that you did a good job; you might also want to share the results and outcomes of your project with the rest of the world, so that others can also benefit from them (dissemination & exploitation of results: see page 30).



Although ‘projects’ are activities that are limited in time, an international LesBiGay project should not come to an end after the last day of the exchange or voluntary service. On the contrary, having participated in such a project could be the start of many **follow-up** activities or commitments, which could lead you or others to start the construction of the next project-pyramid.

The topic we are discussing here is **youth projects**. If we want to remain true to ourselves as youth workers who are striving to support the participation of young people in society, then it is vital to put the **young people at the centre** of the project and to involve them in the different layers of the project-pyramid in accordance to their wishes and capacities. The youth worker becomes a coach that guides and stimulates the process.



👉 There are probably as many project management diagrams as there are project managers. This is just one of many. If you want to discover more about project management, have a look at the **SALTO Project Management Handbook** or the **Training Kit on Project Management** at [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Toolbox/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Toolbox/) or [www.youth-partnership.net](http://www.youth-partnership.net)

Here we will outline a few of the fundamental elements that LesBiGay youth leaders might want to keep in mind when working on projects.

### STARTING FROM THE NEEDS

A project is always organised for a reason. It usually aims to address an issue or deal with a need. Without a need (problems, challenges, wishes, etc.), there is no reason to develop a project. It is therefore essential to complete a **needs analysis** of the environment in which the organisation operates.

It is often the case that the needs are already stated in the **statutes or mission statement** of the organisation. As regards LesBiGay organisations these needs can refer to situations of discrimination faced by young LesBiGays in society, the poor support that is offered through schools or social services to this target group, the need for a safe environment where young LesBiGays can question and come to terms with their sexuality, etc.

The youth workers may have an idea about that what the young people with whom they are in contact need e.g. a space to talk openly about love and relationships, listening to coming-out stories from their peers, learning to accept oneself and one's sexuality, etc. **But it is always best to ask the young people concerned!**

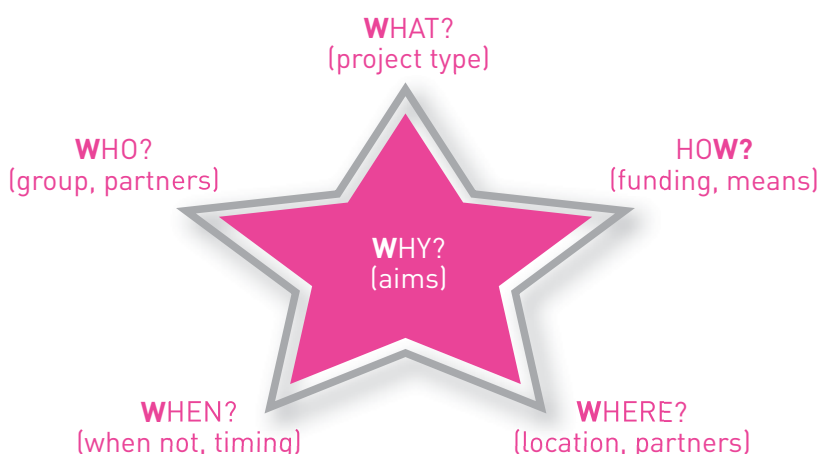


Many projects run into difficulties or have poor results due to the fact that a project is based on **wrongly assumed needs** e.g. it would be difficult to organise a project on lobbying for equal partnership rights if the young people involved are not yet sure of their sexual orientation and have problems in establishing positive relationships. Other projects fail to have an effect because they try to address **too many needs** at once e.g. lobbying politicians for equality, working on personal development, discovering the local LesBiGay community, promoting safe sex, getting positive media attention and changing the world – all at the same time!

## PLANNING & DEFINING

Planning is a fundamental part of any project; it is the foundation of the project-pyramid. It involves an exercise of **reflection** through the project, i.e. what do I want to achieve with this project and in which circumstances would I need to do this in order to be most successful? It mostly happens at the start of a project, but it is useful to note down your initial reflections and go back to them at regular intervals during the course of your project to see if you need to amend them.

One way of planning or defining a project is the **6W star** (inspired by Laswell).



The central question you should ask when defining a project is **Why?** It refers back to the needs. What are the issues you want to deal with in your project? What are the main aims and objectives of the project? What do you want to achieve?

- ★ Make your objectives **SMART**: make them **S**pecific enough; objectives should be **M**easurable and also **A**chievable, **R**ealistic and limited in **T**ime, just like your project is. Trying to “*change the world*” is not so SMART, but “*organising street theatre around LesBiGay issues to make shoppers on a Saturday afternoon reflect on their heteronormative thinking*” is more in the right direction.

Your aims and objectives (Why?) determine to a large extent **What?** you are prepared to undertake in order to achieve these objectives. Or, in other words, not all activities are suited to achieving a specific aim.

*If you want to increase public acceptance of LesBiGay people, a campaign or lobbying would probably be a very efficient way of going about this, more so than opening a LesBiGay youth café for example. However, if you plan to provide a safe space for young people to come to terms with their sexuality, a youth café would be ideal.*

The next question you must ask yourself is **Who?** you would like to involve and reach with your project. What is your target group and the beneficiaries of your project? Who are your partners? Some projects target teachers and schools to create more openness for a neutral form of education as regards sexuality. Other projects could involve parents of LesBiGay young people in order to provide mutual support for them as regards them accepting the sexual orientation of their children.

**How?** are you going to make the project a reality. What are your available means (time, money, people, etc.)? How will you steer the process (who will do what)? What needs to happen to make the project a success, and what would make the project fail? If it is a youth project, what role do the young people have in the project? If you need expertise, partners, funding, etc. for the project **How?** are you going to get these?

The last two questions are **Where?** and **When?** The first one refers to the context in which you are going to carry out the project, the second one is about the period and timing of your project. When discussing Where?, many groups choose to go abroad, however it may be just as rewarding (and cheaper) to host an international group in your own country? The duration of projects should not be underestimated; it is a long-term process and the preparation time takes up a large chunk of this, not forgetting the follow-up possibilities after a project.

All these questions should be linked to the central **Why?** question. If you plan to undertake an activity in a homophobic country, make sure you know why? (*e.g. because your aim is to combat homophobia, and this would indeed be superfluous in a gay friendly place*). If you organise your activity in the Summer, why would you do this? (*e.g. because the young people have holidays and would be available for an exchange; or because there are less headlines in the Summer, so more likelihood you make the press, etc.*). If you decide to involve the parents in the preparation of your LesBiGay youth project, why would you do so? (*e.g. so that parents know what the project is about so that they will allow their children to participate, to get co-funding or a helping hand, to create a wider support network, etc.*).

- 👉 Find different **Types of LesBiGay projects - Some inspiration** on page 36 and in the SALTO database of innovative projects [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InnovativeProjects/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InnovativeProjects/).

## PARTNER FINDING

After planning and identifying what you want to achieve, it is important to **find the right partner or partners** for your international project. Do not accept the first organisation that replies to your partner request. Get to know your potential partner organisation(s) and check if you are on the same wavelength before you decide to undertake a project together. Alternatively, you could start with a smaller project to test how your organisations fit together.

It is important to **build up trust** with your partner organisation for international LesBiGay projects. There are many issues that need to be thought through and shared concerning safety, confidentiality, the situation of both countries (e.g. homophobia, negative media attention, consequences of coming-out, etc.), risk assessment and crisis management, etc.

👉 More about **Partner finding and partnership building** on page 44.

## PREPARATION

While the planning phase concerned the laying down of the project's foundation, the preparation phase concerns **getting people ready** for the actual exchange programme or voluntary service. The details of the project need to be discussed and agreed with the various partner organisations (then leading perhaps to a common application for funding – see below). The preparation phase also entails gaining **commitment and support** for the project: different people will be involved (young people, youth workers, the board of management, parents, other organisations, etc.).

On a more personal level, the young people must **prepare for an encounter** with a different culture (contact between groups, collecting information about the other country, etc.). A fair share of preparation time goes into organising the **practicalities** (e.g. money issues, travel arrangements, what to take, venue & working facilities) and the **programme** (e.g. contributions and suggestions, the preparation of different parts of the project, intercultural evenings).

👉 More about **Specific preparation for LesBiGay projects** on page 67.

## MONEY FOR YOUR PROJECT

It is all good and well to undertake international projects, but who's going to fit the bill? This is a question that often is on the board of management's mind or agenda.

The first step is to **estimate** how much money you will need (budgeting) and where you hope to get the money from. If these two estimates don't match, you can either make your project cheaper, or alternatively work harder to get more money from a bigger variety of sources. It is always a good idea, however, to develop a **plan B** in the event that one of the funding possibilities does not work out.

There are several options when **covering the financial requirements of your project**: you could get funding from foundations, institutions, relatives, etc. if you can justify why your project deserves to be financed; you could organise fundraising events (e.g. parties, carwash, cake sale); you could get money in return for something (e.g. sponsoring, contributions in kind) or you could simply invest your own money in the project.

- ☞ More about **Funding for LesBiGay Projects** on page 52 and in the **Training-Kit on Funding and Financial Management** available from [www.youth-partnership.net](http://www.youth-partnership.net) and [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Toolbox/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Toolbox/)

## IMPLEMENTATION – TAKING THE JUMP

Finally the moment will arrive when your group will have to go abroad or host the international group at home. The fun itself is about to start at this stage, but with it the implementation of the **programme** and management of all **practicalities** related to the project. Don't worry! You are bound to bump into some unforeseen circumstances. It is important to be flexible, without losing sight of the original aims. It is good practice to **regularly check** if you are still on track as regards that which you wanted to achieve with the project (monitoring).

When organising a project involving different LesBiGay groups there may be some **specific issues** that might arise such as how to avoid outing young people who are ill-prepared for it, the situation of young LesBiGays in different cultures, acceptance and co-operation between different groups (gays, lesbians, bisexuals), dealing with emotions and relationships, etc.

- ☞ More about **Dealing with LesBiGay issues in international projects** on page 66

## EVALUATION & DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION OF PROJECT RESULTS

**Evaluation** should *not only be at the end* of a project and it should *not be the end* of a project.

Evaluation (monitoring) should be a **regular process** continued throughout the project in order to:

- Check that the project meets and continues to meet its objectives
- Check that progress is being made and that people are satisfied
- Check that the budget is being managed properly
- Check if the milestones defined during the planning phase have been reached

In this way you can steer or adapt the project to keep it on course.

An evaluation at the end of a project is an **analysis** of whether the aims that you set out were achieved. This shows the importance of defining the project. If the aims were too vague or undefined, then you will not be able to measure whether the project has been a **success or not**. An evaluation consists of an assessment of the project and of what was **learnt or what changes** took place. It should document the challenges faced by the group and **lessons** that could be learned as regards that which could be done differently in the future. Participants, as well as youth workers and organisations, can learn from the evaluation process.

- 👉 More about evaluation at [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Evaluation/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Evaluation/) and in the Training-Kit on Evaluation available from [www.youth-partnership.net](http://www.youth-partnership.net) and [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Toolbox](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Toolbox)

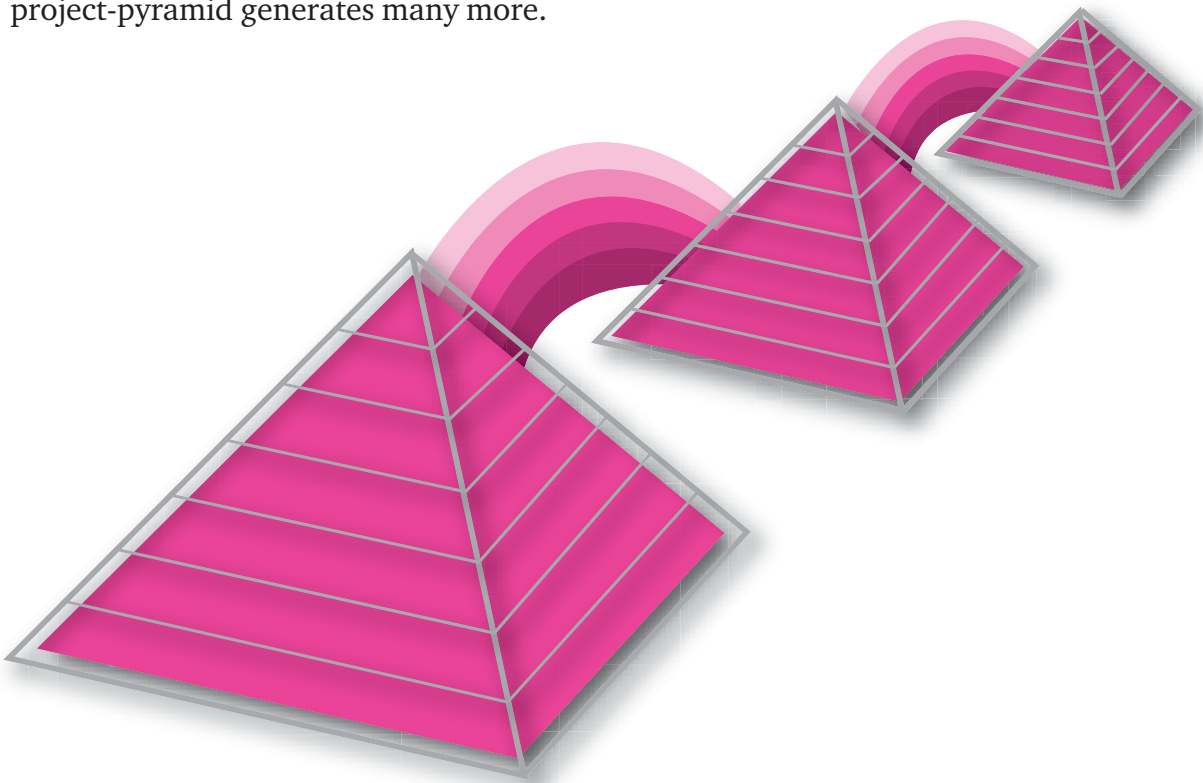
**Dissemination & Exploitation of project results** refers to all the actions you can undertake to increase the impact of your project. Your project is most likely an eye-opening experience for the 30 or so participants but you can do a lot more. You could also create an educational booklet based on your programme so that more people can benefit from your results; you could catch media attention with your project; you could document your results and follow-up projects and show them to those who gave you funding, to your board of management, or to the media in order to raise your organisation's profile; or you could document what participants learned on the exchange or voluntary service in a Youthpass, etc. **One project, many spin-offs!**

- 👉 More about **Making the most of LesBiGay projects** on page 82 and in “Making Waves: more impact with your youth project” [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/MakingWaves/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/MakingWaves/)

### It isn't over yet - Follow-up

A project often leads on to more. The evaluation can stimulate creative reflection as regards “**what next?**”. If your aims were not reached, what else can be done to move in the right direction? And if the project was a success, the youth workers and young people involved might want to repeat this rewarding experience and set up new projects.

Your work as a youth worker is not over after the exchange or the voluntary service has come to an end. Part of your task is also to **guide the young people to take a step further**, so that one project-pyramid generates many more.



### YOUNG PEOPLE AT THE CENTRE OF YOUR PROJECT – PARTICIPATION!

Participation is about **involving young people during the whole process of the project**, from the creation of the idea to evaluation. This is a quality criteria for many European funding organisations, and in particular for the European Commission’s Youth in Action programme. The idea here is to encourage young people to participate in the project as actors rather than as consumers and spectators.



### “It is our project”

Young people might not have the skills and experience of a youth worker, but they do have many ideas and skills of their own. International youth projects are an ideal occasion where they can **experiment**, try out their ideas and take on responsibilities – if you allow them to! The ideal case would be such that youth projects would be projects involving young people, and are organised by young people for young people.

In an actual **participation project** the young people form the backbone of the youth project; they are the centre of the project-pyramid (see page 24). They should be the ones coming up with the ideas for projects (e.g. the themes, the type of international activity); they should be consulted about or be involved in planning the project (defining the 6 W – see page 26); maybe they have preferences for partners they want to work with, etc. In this way it becomes “**their own project**” and they will be more committed to it.

Young people can take on different tasks in the preparation and implementation of the project. They **actively co-construct the project**, this being a very empowering experience. The more the young participants organise themselves, the more valuable the experience for each and every one of them, and ultimately for the organisations themselves. The young participants will be able to develop and practice **skills** (co-operation & teamwork, project management skills, time management, dealing with finances, taking on responsibilities, etc.) which can be very useful in their personal and professional lives.

### The role of the youth workers

For one reason or another there are not so many participation projects being organised. Young people are used to having youth workers, adults, parents, teachers around ‘who should know better’ and who keep the reins. It might be difficult, therefore, to **get young people motivated** and serious explanation will be required as regards how you foresee the project and what your role will be.

Furthermore, there is a **large range of leisure activities** available to young people nowadays, and as a result they may not be interested in organising a project of their own, especially if they will have to take initiatives and have to work to make it happen. Youth workers must try to **stimulate initiative** and **motivate** young people to set up their own project. You could give them ideas about what is possible, or put them in contact with other groups that have completed a successful international project. This might help you get the ball rolling.

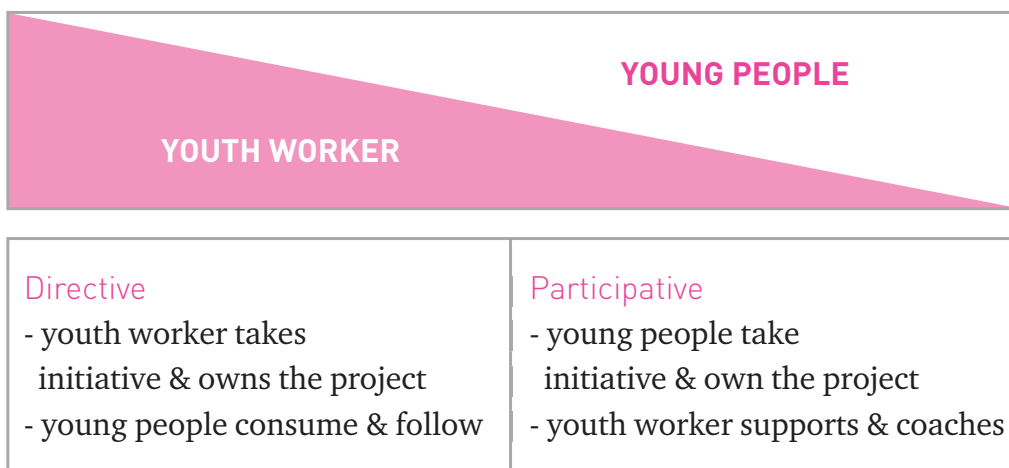
When a group of young people decide to give it a go, the youth worker has a major role to play in **creating beneficial conditions** for the project work to be done by the young people (e.g. organising regular meetings and chairing them if the young people don't wish to do so, giving advice when the young members need help, pointing out elements or mistakes that they should reflect upon, putting in a good word for them with the board or with their parents). The youth worker should **coach** the group process and ensure the young people don't become demotivated in the event of setbacks or mishaps.

On the other hand, the youth worker is a **guardian angel of the project**, ensuring that nothing too serious will go wrong. Of course the young participants may make mistakes once in a while, but errors are the best source of learning. However, if those mistakes potentially jeopardise the whole project (or relationships between people or the organisation), the youth worker should act as a **buffer**. The youth worker should not sit back and watch from a distance, but should also provide **support and guidance** to the participants when they need it, and draw their attention to project management aspects they may have missed.

👉 **“Coaching Guide”** developed by the SALTO Participation Resource Centre:

[www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Participation/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Participation/)

It will depend on the experience of your group as to what extent they will require **guidance and coordination**. On the one hand, a completely dependent group or new people that don't know each other already may need a more directive approach; mostly it is possible to give youth groups a lot of leeway in order to take their own initiative and to steer the project themselves, as long as the youth worker provides the necessary means to do this.



### Distributing the tasks

As soon as you have decided, together with your LesBiGay group, on the kind of project you want to set up (see a list of possible projects on page 58), you can get to work on the rest of the preparation. As is the case with any project, there are **many tasks and small jobs** to be done. These can range from finding partner organisations or drafting funding applications to visiting possible venues for the project, or defining the programme, etc.

It is not possible (nor wise) to have everybody involved in every aspect of the project, but on the other hand, some people (including the youth workers) should have an **overview** of what has been done and what still needs to be done. Especially when it comes to the legal and financial aspects. Leaving things to coincidence could be disastrous for the project or for your organisation. It is up to you and your group of young people to find a way to keep an overview of what is being done.

Furthermore, it can be highly **motivating** if the young participants are allowed to take care of those tasks they are either good at or that they enjoy doing (and together with the persons they would like to work with). One way to distribute the tasks could be through organising a 'Jobs Fair'.



### The Jobs Fair

A method to distribute tasks and responsibilities amongst the young participants.

- Hold a brainstorming session and list all possible jobs that need to be done for the project (these can range from larger tasks like accounting to smaller ones like making a poster for a fundraising event).
- Write all these jobs down on a sheet of paper and hang it on the wall.
- Together with the group, cluster the jobs that are similar or closely linked on different parts of the wall e.g. reserving the flight, getting travel insurance, buying the bus ticket to the airport
- The young participants can volunteer for different clusters of tasks according to their preferences and stick a post-it note with their name on their chosen cluster.
- It is important that nobody is left to his or her own devices when doing a task. You could specify a rule stating that at least 2 people should be in charge (for smaller tasks) and between 3 to 5 for larger jobs (with more than 5 it becomes difficult to handle). The youth workers can also put a post-it with their names on the clusters of tasks where they think they should have a role (e.g. to help with the funding application etc.)
- During the process of volunteering for different clusters of tasks, the participants can check with their co-volunteers if they have a similar view of the same task, or whether they have a different view of what needs to be done. This allows them to still change their post-its and commitments to different jobs.
- Discuss with the group what should be done if there are tasks that nobody volunteered for. Should the youth worker undertake them? Does someone want to help out?

It is essential to ensure that no one feels obliged to take on a job they are reluctant to do. To round off, make a list of all the tasks, the persons responsible, and a timeframe as regards what needs to be done. Ensure nothing is missing and ask for a progress report on a regular basis.

The advantage of a Jobs Fair is that people can use their **skills** (e.g. artistic people can make the poster for an event or illustrate the final report of the exchange), their **wishes** (e.g. someone might want to try to fill in an application for funding) and **social networks** (e.g. working together with each other). This is not only **motivating**, but it also puts several people in charge so that they can help each other out – and of course the youth workers are there to give **support also**.

## TYPES OF LESBIGAY PROJECTS - SOME INSPIRATION

Many projects are possible and can be beneficial to LesBiGay youth across Europe and beyond. Here we list a few examples of projects for inspirational purposes only. There is no limit to the variety of projects you can undertake.

### YOUTH EXCHANGES

*Groups of young people from different countries spend a week or more in a host country taking part in a non-formal educational programme. Exchanges can be bilateral (involving 2 countries), trilateral (3 countries) or multilateral (more than 3). The exchange happens when the young people are together in one country – there is not necessarily a counter-visit, but it is possible to add a second leg. This would be considered a second exchange.*

### Homophobia in Europe

LesBiGay youth organisations could decide to meet in a European country where homophobia is prevalent in order to make a statement to remind the host country of the fundamental rights that all citizens of the European Union should enjoy. Young people from different countries can attend workshops on how to deal with homophobia. They can develop different forms of art and street theatre against homophobia and stage them in public places.

### I need a hero

Many studies have shown that LesBiGay people often feel a lack of positive role models in their societies who could be inspirational for their own personal development. A youth exchange can be about coming together and sharing LesBiGay culture from different countries, comparing the role models there are in young people's lives, how they are pictured in the media and how role models are an important part of a young person's development.



from SALTO TC Rainbow

## YOUTH FESTIVALS OR CULTURAL EVENTS

*Cultural or artistic events can also be organised such as film festivals, art festivals, concerts, photo exhibitions around topics of specific interest such as LesBiGay families, art and sexuality, etc.*

### Hidden Art

LesBiGay related culture is poorly known in Europe. Nevertheless, forms and expressions of LesBiGay culture have taken place throughout the centuries in one shape or another (literature, painting, photography, cinema). A European project could bring artists from different countries together, who would present and share the way LesBiGay related art was present in the past?, in particular, in hidden or disguised forms. A DVD including these art forms and commentary could be produced based on this project.

### Education - an insider's perspective

Several European organisations could organise a forum where young people from around Europe, as well as teachers and educators, can discuss the current situation of education in relation to homosexuality and bisexuality. During this conference, several subjects could be analysed: history, literature, social sciences, biology and an ideal inclusive education could be formulated. See also [www.lgbt-education.info](http://www.lgbt-education.info)

## CAMPAIGNS

*Young people's voices reach other young people or the media in a different way to organisations and institutions. The idea here is to run information- or media-campaigns using the visual and textual in order to raise awareness and change opinions of a wider audience.*

### Coming-out, a reality

Several organisations could come together and initiate a project where the process of coming-out is presented to different audiences using different visual messages and/or media actions. By working together and initiating the different actions at the same time, they can draw media attention underlining the relevance of the issue of coming-out on an international level.

## TRAINING ACTIVITIES

*Youth workers or peer educators from different countries can organise training courses on specific topics such as dealing with bullying in schools, empowerment of LesBiGay youth leaders, etc. in order to acquire additional skills and competencies on issues they consider essential.*

### SALTO TC Rainbow

Youth workers (both volunteers & employed) can make use of international projects while working with young people in their organisations. The SALTO Inclusion Resource Centre organises a European training course to train LesBiGay youth workers on how to set up international LesBiGay projects. See [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/TCrainbow/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/TCrainbow/)

### Supporting young LesBiGays with their coming-out

A training course could be organised specifically for youth workers and volunteers who are responsible for supporting LesBiGay young people with their coming-out. The course could address issues such as the psychology of LesBiGay youth, counselling skills, as well as provide a space for sharing best practices.

## CONFERENCES, SEMINARS

*These could be meetings and discussions around more general issues where the participants gather and share their experiences around topics such as the development of LesBiGay youth in today's changing society, HIV/ AIDS prevention with youth, etc.*

### Partnerships-Marriage-Parenthood

In various European countries gay marriage and adoption by homosexual couples is a reality. In other countries, the act of mentioning these two issues is met with strong homophobic reaction. A European conference could address the function of marriage and adoption in society, and the rights of LesBiGay people in this respect. Psychologists, youth workers and married LesBiGay couples could be invited to share their experiences and practices in dealing with this virulent debate.

## LARGE SCALE PROJECTS

*You can also combine a variety of activities and projects, whether international or not. You could organise a LesBiGay youth exchange during a cultural festival on minorities; you could organise an international LesBiGay conference at the beginning or at the end of an anti-discrimination campaign; you could organise an international LesBiGay cultural festival together with an annual Pride celebration, etc.*

- 👉 Please keep in mind that the **EU Youth in Action programme** only gives funding for specific types of projects (see page 59). Do not hesitate to contact the National Agency in your country who can give you more information – or download the Programme Guide from <http://ec.europa.eu/youth/>



*from SALTO TC Rainbow*



## JOINING EXISTING LESBIGAY ACTIVITIES – A FIRST STEP

Perhaps you feel that it is too soon to set up your **own international project**. Instead you can start building up some international experience by taking part in international activities organised by a variety of organisations. These organisations run international activities from conferences and international meetings to sports competitions, cultural festivals, etc.

Through attending these events you can **meet potential project-partners** or **identify specific topics or themes** you and your organisation could work on. When you attend such an international event, it also helps you to get an insight into what an international project involves, how it should be done, what can go wrong, etc. Your participation in one of these events might convince you of the **benefits of international projects**.

Similarly, if some of the young members in your organisation want to organise something on an international level you can suggest to them to attend one of the following international events to **get a taste for it**. And, you never know, they might return with enough ideas and motivation to set up a project themselves.

**The following is a non-exhaustive list of the potential organisations and events you might wish to contact.**

### Take part in an international LesBiGay Seminar or Conference

- **IGLYO** = International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Youth and Students Organisation = [www.iglyo.com](http://www.iglyo.com)  
International network and umbrella organisation for local, regional and national LGBT youth and students organisations (target group aged under 30). IGLYO organises European study sessions and conferences for member organisations (e.g. about education, LGBTQ youth empowerment, interreligious and intercultural dialogue etc.) IGLYO also represent LGBTQ youth in e.g. the European Youth Forum and in political institutions such as the European Commission and the Council of Europe. Becoming a member of IGLYO enables you to contribute to work for LGBTQ Young people's rights on an international level! IGLYO has a newsletter to keep you informed about a wide range of relevant activities.
- **ILGA-Europe** = European Region of ILGA = International Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender Association = [www.ilga-europe.org](http://www.ilga-europe.org) ([www.ilga.org](http://www.ilga.org))  
Striving for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender equality in Europe. Has a notice board online with events, conferences, seminars (e.g. about HIV, Gender, Parenthood). Also links, newsletters, LGBT resources, etc.

Note: they also give the possibility to upload your own country information and events and spread it to the European LGBT community

- **Queer Easter** = [www.queereaster.net](http://www.queereaster.net)
- ECOSY - Young European Socialists (<http://www.ecosy.org/Queer.21.0.html>) organises a yearly seminar around Easter on Queer issues
- **ANSO** = Association of Nordic LGBTQ Student Organisations  
ANSO fights discrimination based on homophobia and transphobia in Nordic universities and aims to increase the quality of higher education by fighting heteronormativity.
- **LesMigraS** = [www.lesmigras.de](http://www.lesmigras.de)  
LesMigraS is a European wide network of lesbian migrants, black lesbians, lesbians' and migrants' projects and individuals that combat multidimensional discrimination of lesbian migrants and black lesbians.
- And many more.

Visit or take part in a Pride march in another country or participate in the numerous cultural & political events organised around it

- **EPOA** = European Pride Organisers Association = [www.europride.info](http://www.europride.info)  
Coordination of gay and lesbian Pride events in Europe – and of Europride.
- **International Association of LGBT Pride Coordinators** = [www.interpride.org](http://www.interpride.org)  
Coordinates the World Pride every few years.
- **Some national prides have an international element** e.g. Cork Pride

Compete in international Sports Competitions and the cultural programmes surrounding them

- **EGLSF** = European Gay and Lesbian Sports Federation = [www.gaysport.info](http://www.gaysport.info)  
Federation of various gay and lesbian sports clubs across Europe many of whom organise international tournaments in different disciplines. Coordination of the EuroGames and the European Gay & Lesbian Championships
- **World Federation of Gay Games** = [www.gaygames.com](http://www.gaygames.com). Coordinates the quadriannual world Gay Games, combined with a cultural programme and arts festival.
- **GLISA** = international gay and lesbian sports association = [www.glisa.org](http://www.glisa.org)  
Develops gay and lesbian sports worldwide. GLISA has a global calendar of GLBT sport events – It also coordinates the OutGames (similar to the Gay Games with lots of cultural events and conferences organised around it)
- **'World' in front of Outgames**  
Coordinates the World Outgames

### Take action for the Rights of the LGBT community together with people across the world

- **Amnesty International LGBT Network** = [www.ai-lgbt.org](http://www.ai-lgbt.org)  
Acting to prevent and denounce Human Rights violations – with extensive links to other LGBT Human Rights organisations and their Human Rights activities.
- **International Gay & Lesbian Human Rights Commission** = [www.iglhrc.org](http://www.iglhrc.org)  
advocates a world in which the fundamental human rights of gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, transgendered people, and people with HIV and AIDS are respected and accorded the protection of international human rights law. Lists Human Rights events (conferences, fora, etc.) all over the world regarding this issue.

### National LGBT activities that are open to international participants

Also national LGBT organisations organise activities to which LGBT youth/activists from other countries can participate. This could be a first step towards solid partnerships and exchanges.

- **Stichting OUT! Netherlands** = [www.outweb.nl](http://www.outweb.nl)  
Organises an International Summer Camp
- **MAG-Jeunes Gais et Lesbiennes** = [www.mag-paris.org](http://www.mag-paris.org)  
Conference about « youth against heterosexism »
- **BGO Gemini Bulgaria** = [www.bgogemini.org](http://www.bgogemini.org)  
Is planning to organise a Contact Making Seminar and Youth Exchanges
- Various **LGBT sports organisations** organise international LGBT sports tournaments e.g. [www.tangra-bulgaria.org](http://www.tangra-bulgaria.org), [www.bgs.org](http://www.bgs.org), ... (see also EFGSF above)

### Non-LGBT-activities open & beneficial to LGBT youth

- **SALTO Inclusion and Diversity Training Courses** and other training courses and seminars within the Youth in Action programme (organised by youth organisations or by National Agencies): find an overview in the European Training Calendar at [www.salto-youth.net/training/](http://www.salto-youth.net/training/)
- **Council of Europe's Youth Centres** = [www.coe.int/youth/](http://www.coe.int/youth/)  
The Youth and Sport Directorate of the Council of Europe organises annually a number of training courses for youth workers in Europe.
- **European Youth Forum** = [www.youthforum.org](http://www.youthforum.org)  
Youth platform representing European youth interests within the European Institutions – organises training and conferences for youth workers from their member organisations (IGLYO is member of the European Youth Forum).

- **International Cultural Youth Exchange** = [www.icye.org](http://www.icye.org)  
Organises long term volunteer placements and would also like to host volunteers in LGBT organisations and/or send LGBT volunteers
- **ESU** = National Unions of Students in Europe = [www.esib.org](http://www.esib.org)  
ESU has an equality project focused on sexuality
- **UNITED for Intercultural Action** = [www.united.non-profit.nl](http://www.united.non-profit.nl)  
Organisation fighting against discrimination and racism. Their conferences and seminars could also be useful for combating homophobia.
- Also have a look at the **European Youth Portal** for more international opportunities for young people (studying, working, volunteering etc.) = [www.europa.eu/youth/](http://www.europa.eu/youth/)
- And many more.



# PARTNER FINDING

# AND PARTNERSHIP BUILDING

## HOW DO YOU FIND A PARTNER?

The most interesting part of an international project is **the contact and co-operation** that is made with organisations from different countries. Young people meet peers from another country, either when going abroad or hosting groups from other countries. Engaging with partner organisations is a very **enriching experience** with many potential benefits (see page 12).

But how will you locate **suitable partner organisations**? Is there a list you can choose from? Should you search for a partner organisation on the internet? Should you visit various organisations in a certain country and then choose one? There are more ways than one to find a partner organisation. Different organisations prefer **different partner finding techniques**, somewhat similar to finding a partner in one's own personal life.



*from olleke.be*

### Activity: how to find a partner?

Together with your group of volunteers or with your Board of Management organise a brainstorming session to come up with ideas about how each person goes about finding partners, lovers or friends. Ask them to write down their ideas on post-its or pieces of paper and to hang them on one side of the wall. On the other side of the wall, “translate” these ideas into what an organisation could do to find a partner.

During the **SALTO TC Rainbow**, we came up with the following results:

you	your organisation
You meet people through friends and acquaintances	Ask your members or colleagues if they know of any organisation/people abroad that would be interested in organising a project together with your organisation
You meet people on nights out or during activities or events where you are likely to find people with similar interests	Take part in events and activities where there are other organisations present (conferences, seminars, meetings, etc.)
You can make use of specialised dating events and activities	There exist contact making seminars for organisations that are looking for partners and YOUTH National Agencies can circulate your partner finding requests
Present yourself in a positive or sexy light to attract looks	Participate in parades, conferences, seminars Profile your organisation and its work
You can surf the internet and register on dating sites	Look through Partner finding databases on the internet and list your organisation

### SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR PARTNER FINDING

There are many sources of information that can help you identify potential partners for projects. You could have one preferred way of finding partners or you could combine several methods.

Within the European Union's Youth in Action programme there are a variety of **tools to help you find a partner group** (for an exchange) or a **project** (for a voluntary service):

- Most National Agencies (NAs) in the YiA programme have some kind of **partner request form** usually in electronic format on their homepage. The NAs can forward your completed form to one or more of the other NAs located across Europe. These NAs use different ways to circulate the partner requests to potential partners (e.g. e-mail lists, homepage, newsletters). You will find a list of NAs at [http://ec.europa.eu/youth/youth/contacts\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/youth/contacts_en.htm)

- Some National Agencies also have a **partner finding database online**, e.g. the German and British NAs - you can locate these databases via the SALTO partner finding page at [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/partnerfinding/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/partnerfinding/)
- If you are looking for a host organisation for a European Voluntary Service project, you will find a **host database** at [http://ec.europa.eu/youth/evs/aod/hei\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/evs/aod/hei_en.cfm)
- Some centres for Regional Co-operation have **addresses of youth organisations** in so-called “partner countries” with whom Youth in Action programme projects are possible. e.g. SALTO Eastern Europe & Caucasus: [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/eeca/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/eeca/), SALTO South East Europe: [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/see/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/see/), the EuroMed platform for co-operation with EuroMed countries: [www.euromedp.org](http://www.euromedp.org)
- ...

**Europe-wide networks and umbrella organisations** can provide you with names and contacts of organisations in different countries

- European Youth Forum: [www.youthforum.org](http://www.youthforum.org) and its many member organisations: international youth NGOs and National Youth Councils
- ...

**International LGBT platforms**, as well as the websites of national LGBT organisations in different countries, can be helpful when searching for partners

- International Lesbian & Gay Association (ILGA): [www.ilga.org](http://www.ilga.org)
- ILGA Europe: [www.ilga-europe.org](http://www.ilga-europe.org)
- IGLYO: [www.iglyo.com](http://www.iglyo.com) (*International Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender and Queer Youth and Student Organisations*). On the IGLYO webpage you will find information and contacts about member organisations of the IGLYO network.
- ...

**While participating** in various Training Courses (TC), Contact Making Seminars (CMS), or Short Study Visits (SSV), you may well meet youth workers from **potential partner organisations**. Information about different training opportunities can be found on [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/training/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/training/) or from your National Agency.

There exists a Yahoo group of **European Youth Exchange organisations** that might be instrumental in finding partners and also for getting answers to technical and practical questions: you can register for this mailing list via <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/european-youth-exchanges/>



## BUILDING A HEALTHY PARTNERSHIP

It is not difficult to build a partnership, however it does require some work.

You meet a partner, you like each other, you tell each other about yourselves, you start meeting and doing things together. This is the usual pattern when building a partnership. In our private lives, this would already be a good start. In the case of two or more organisations, however, it is essential to go one step further and to create a partnership where youth workers and volunteers feel they can **trust** each other, **learn** from each other, **work** together, **exchange** ideas freely about the project and initiatives.

A healthy partnership is a partnership in which all those involved grow, learn from and appreciate this co-operation. It does not prevent you from having discussions, disagreements and misunderstandings, but it creates a space in which they can take place in a **safe and empowering environment**. As is the case with any healthy relationship, the issue is not about avoiding disagreement, but rather about being able to overcome it together.

The key to a successful partnership lies in one essential aspect: **personal relationships**. It is important that the initiators of the partnership (e.g. a group of volunteers, board members, youth workers that met on a training course) like each other and get along. This is a **solid base** for a partnership to **continue to build** on. However, if a partnership is solely based on personal relationships, it will only take a small disagreement or career change to completely ruin the co-operation.

It involves more than just finding a partner organisation and getting along with a youth worker abroad: the main issue is **how to retain and work with this partner**. The following are some elements that you may have to reflect on in your partnership!

 Based on the **Training-Kit on Social Inclusion** available from [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Toolbox/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Toolbox/) and [www.youth-partnership.net](http://www.youth-partnership.net)

### ARE YOUR ORGANISATIONS COMPATIBLE?

- Do your organisations share **common aims**? Or are they at least compatible?
- Do the organisations work with a similar **target group** (age, mix, gender, educational background, geographical situation)? And if not how will you deal with the differences?
- Do your organisations have similar **activities**? Would you find a programme in common that both organisations are happy with?
- Do you have similar **organisational capacities** (size of the organisation, budgets, available networks)? Or would you find ways to work together on an equal footing?
- Do you have similar **organisational cultures**/ways of working? Or at least the openness to adapt to different ways of working? Are the differences in approach reconcilable?
- Do you have efficient **channels of communication**? A common working language?
- Do you have similar **legal requirements** (health & safety, needed qualifications, alcohol & drugs policies, etc.)? Are they compatible?



*from SALTO TC Rainbow*

Of course no two organisations are completely the same and share all the above elements. It is important to be flexible, but also to be conscious of how you will deal with the differences. The more similar your organisations are, the easier the co-operation, but perhaps less to be learnt from each other.

### WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR IN A PARTNERSHIP?

- What is your **motivation** behind the partnership? What is the position and recommendations of the board of management? Be clear on what you want the partnership to be and not to be!
- What do you expect to **benefit** from the partnership? For the organisations? For the target group? Which benefits are most important to you, and which are less important?
- What are the concrete **needs** and the **resources** available to invest in the partnership (staff, volunteers, time, money, material, etc.)?
- Are there **external factors** that are pushing you toward a partnership or keeping you from establishing one (funding, politics, etc.)?
- Will the partnership be **balanced** (equal contributions, equal benefits, equal involvement, etc.)?



*from olleke.be*

#### Partnership Metaphors

During a meeting between different organisations, all participants are asked to look for a **metaphor** to describe how they see the partnership. Each person draws (or writes) these metaphors on a flipchart. Each participant presents his or her **drawings** in turn and explains the metaphor: e.g. “I see this partnership as a speedboat because we need to be reactive and adapt quickly to changes in our society”.

The facilitator points out the various ideas contained in the different presentations. This could be a starting point for a discussion on what is important in order for a partnership to work.

## DEVELOPING A PROJECT TOGETHER

- **Common aims:** What are the common aims of the project? What possibilities do both organisations feel can be achieved together?
- **Type of activities:** What types of activities can the different partners work together on? Which activities would they prefer not to co-operate on? And why?
- **Evaluation criteria and monitoring:** What criteria do the partners use to monitor and evaluate projects and the partnership? At which intervals? What would be the limit of acceptance?
- **Partnership timetable:** What is the timespan for the project? The co-operation timespan? What deadlines must the partners adhere to?
- **Distribution of tasks:** Who does what? How flexible and reliable is the process for distributing tasks? What backups are foreseen?
- **Budget and resources:** What resources, both human and financial, will each organisation commit to the project?
- **Co-operation between organisations and groups:** How will the youth workers and the young people in both organisations contact each other? How could they get to know each other better?
- **Training needs:** If there are certain skills lacking in the organisations, how will you overcome this? Do you foresee training, job-shadowing, etc?
- **Communication and coordination:** How will you keep all stakeholders informed about the project? How are you going to ensure regular contact between the partners? What needs and what doesn't need to be communicated/reported? How will you make decisions?
- Agree on the **final project plan**. It is important to make sure that the plan is agreed upon by the decision making body of the various organisations involved. Ensure organisational support for and commitment to the project.

# FUNDING FOR LESBIGAY



# PROJECTS

to receive (*income*). This will give you an idea about whether your project is **financially viable or not**. If it isn't financially possible you will either have to lower the cost of your project or put more effort into raising more funds. Some examples are listed below.

List all the items of expenditure and income in two separate columns. When you have completed this inventory of cost items and sources of income, put an approximate cost on the different items, based (as far as possible) on real figures.

For example:

Out	In
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparation meeting (travel, food, accommodation, rental of meeting room)</li> <li>• Communication costs (e-mail, stamps, phone, internet, etc.)</li> <li>• Office costs (electricity, rent, water, office stationary, etc.)</li> <li>• Project costs (travel, visa &amp; insurance, food &amp; accommodation, rental of meeting room &amp; equipment, material, leisure time activities, etc.)</li> <li>• Trainer fees &amp; staff costs</li> <li>• Evaluation &amp; follow-up costs</li> <li>• Unexpected costs (5%) – etc.</li> </ul>	<p>A mix of the funding providers listed below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EU Youth in Action Programme</li> <li>• Grant from the local authority</li> <li>• Fundraising (party, cake sale, etc.)</li> <li>• Use of meeting room and computers donated by Company X</li> <li>• Contribution from the organisation</li> <li>• Participation fees</li> <li>• Etc.</li> </ul>

## HOW MUCH MONEY DO YOU NEED?

Before you start planning your project with your partner organisation you will need to **draw up a budget for your project** and secure funding. You will need to make an estimate of all the money you will spend on your project (*expenditure*) and all the money that you hope

### Important!

- **A budget needs to be balanced** – every cent that you spend needs to come from somewhere.
- **Phase your budget** – put all the expenses and income on a timeline to see if there will be periods in which you will have to finance expenses before you have received the relevant grant (grants sometimes only arrive once the project is finished).
- **Do your research** – the more you base the figures on actual prices the more realistic your budget will be. Take into account price fluctuations, exchange rates, some unforeseen circumstances, etc. Don't base your budget on the cheapest of the cheapest as special offers might no longer be available when you will have to organise your project some months down the line.
- **Don't go it alone** – it is very easy to make mistakes or to overlook certain costs or possible income sources – you could ask some people who aren't involved in the project to **double-check the budget and the figures**.

### WHAT TO DO IF YOUR PROJECT COSTS TOO MUCH – YOUR INCOME IS TOO LOW?

**Everything that goes out must come in** – that's the basic and logical rule. Even if you spend more money than you have for the project, this money will either come from a bank (via a loan or overdraft), from a supplier (unpaid bills) or from somebody who invested more of their own money than is good form them. It is always best, however, to **match the income with the expenditure**.

One way to **rebalance your budget** is to make your project 'cheaper' or, in other words, to reduce costs. The following are some ideas to go about this:

- **Go for less** – less participants, less working days, less publications, less excursions, etc.
- **Go cheaper** – electronic publications instead of printed ones, low-cost airlines instead of a regular carrier, a youth hostel or host families instead of hotels, etc.
- **Do it yourself** – ask for volunteers to do the layout of a publication, develop the website, or to cook instead of using catering companies, etc.
- **Be creative** – paint on an old sheet instead of printing posters, take a night train to save a night in a hotel, organise one or more activities on a public square or in a forest instead of renting a seminar room, etc.

Alternatively, you can try to avail of more income sources from a wider variety of funding providers. The next section gives an introduction to who has money for projects:

## WHERE TO GET MONEY FROM?

There are plenty of pink Euros, Pounds and Dollars around! There exist a great number of sources of funding for LGBT activities, as well as for LGBT youth in particular. There are a variety of organisations, institutions and corporations that give money for LGBT projects – some give explicitly to LGBT (youth) work, while others give funding to the general (youth) public.

### In General:

- The bigger the provider, the more funding, the stricter the rules and procedures, the more paperwork, the more formal procedures
- The smaller the provider, the smaller the contribution, the more creative the ways of getting the money (e.g. fundraising ideas), the more reliance on personal contacts and understanding



*from SALTO TC Rainbow*



## Who gives money?

### International Organisations

- Unesco, United Nations: [www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org)
- Council of Europe: European Youth Foundation, European Mobility Fund (rail travel) [www.coe.int/youth/](http://www.coe.int/youth/)
- European Union: e.g. YiA programme <http://ec.europa.eu/youth/> , EQUAL, Combat against Discrimination, etc. more info on European funding from [www.eurodesk.org](http://www.eurodesk.org)
- ...

### International Co-operation Agreements

- Commonwealth Youth: [www.thecommonwealth.org/cyp](http://www.thecommonwealth.org/cyp), [www.cyec.org.uk](http://www.cyec.org.uk) ,...
- Francophone Countries Youth Mobility: <http://pmj.francophonie.org/>
- ...

### National Ministries and Governments

- Cross-border co-operation: e.g. French-German Youth Office [www.ofaj.org](http://www.ofaj.org), German Czech Youth Office, Romanian-Hungarian Youth Co-operation, etc.
- National Projects: e.g. Dutch Government funding for LGBT projects in Eastern Europe [www.movisie.nl](http://www.movisie.nl), etc.
- Embassies or Cultural Institutes of other countries: e.g. [www.britishcouncil.org](http://www.britishcouncil.org), [www.alliancefr.org](http://www.alliancefr.org), [www.goethe.de](http://www.goethe.de), Swedish Embassy, etc.
- ...

### Foundations and Funders

- Find a list of general Foundations in the [www.fundersonline.org](http://www.fundersonline.org) database of the European Foundation Centre [www.efc.be](http://www.efc.be)
- Find a list of LGBT specific Foundations at [www.lgbtfunders.org](http://www.lgbtfunders.org) & [www.iglhrc.org](http://www.iglhrc.org)
- ILGA Europe also has a list of LGBT funders [www.ilga-europe.org](http://www.ilga-europe.org)
- ...

### National LGBT Organisations with an international focus

- COC Netherlands: [www.coc.nl](http://www.coc.nl)
- RFSL Sweden: [www.rfsl.se](http://www.rfsl.se) and [www.rfslungdom.se](http://www.rfslungdom.se)
- LBL Denmark: [www.lbl.dk](http://www.lbl.dk)
- ...

### Companies

- Sponsorship
- Contributions in kind
- ...

### Local Community

- Local Authorities, City youth council, etc.
- Political parties
- Local Charities
- Churches
- Trade Unions
- ...

### Individuals

- Fundraising, cake sales, raffles, etc.  
Check the fundraising idea-bank at [www.fund-raising.com/fundraising-ideas.php](http://www.fund-raising.com/fundraising-ideas.php)
- Participation fees
- ...

### Some Remarks:

- Always check with your country's tax office whether funding is considered '**income**' or '**revenue**' for your organisation, which could mean that you might have to pay taxes on it
- Virtually none of the funding providers will allow 100% funding – most require **co-funding** or **your own contribution** – where are you going to get co-funding from?
- Make sure that your project is adapted to or fits the aims and procedures of the funding providers – have a **plan B** in case a funding application isn't granted

## APPLYING FOR FUNDING

Once you know how much money you will require, you can effectively try to acquire this money from a variety of providers, foundations and individuals. Funding providers make money available for a reason: it is up to you to see to what extent your project fits the provider's objectives and criteria. Usually these guidelines are mentioned online. Read them carefully before you make an application.

Once you have decided to apply, it is important to **convince the funders of the reason why** they should fund your project or organisation. It might be clear to you, but if you don't explain the reasons why your project is worthwhile from the perspective of the funder, it will be difficult for the selection committee to justify giving you the funding.

### Some tips

- **Get to know your (potential) funders:** why are they willing to give you funding?, what are their requirements?, who is the best person to contact for more info or feedback on your potential project?
- Check the **terms and conditions of the funders** e.g. staff costs (some programmes do not allow salaries for youth workers or trainers), unexpected costs (will they fund contingency costs?), etc.
- Check the rules as regards **buying large equipment** (e.g. computers, cameras, etc.) as often funders will not finance these longer-lasting investments that will remain beyond the scope of the project
- Check the **rules as regards co-funding** e.g. the EU Youth in Action programme does not recognise other EU funding as co-funding; sometimes contributions in kind are not regarded as co-funding – check with your national agency/funding provider in case of doubt.
- Translate your project into the **language of the funder:** e.g. there is a big difference between “getting to know the local environment” and “a guided city tour”; some use the terms ‘European Citizenship’ or ‘active citizenship’, while others prefer ‘participation’ or ‘empowerment’ etc.
- It will be necessary to prepare a different **budget/application adapted to each funder** and their terms and conditions.
- **Facilitate the work of the selection committee.** Use the application form provided and stick to the questions asked (this will be the only information required to base their selection on). Provide summaries and avoid lengthy prose or unwanted attachments. Make them smile
- **Is it clear?** The funding provider may not know your organisation, your work, your internal jargon. Ask a “naïve reader” external to your organisation or project, to check if your application makes sense.

👉 You can find some application specifics for the **YiA programme** in “What is behind the paperwork” - Coyote 9 (August 2004) [www.youth-partnership.net](http://www.youth-partnership.net)

👉 Find more tips and tricks about budgeting, funding applications and financial management in the **Training-kit on Funding and Financial Management:** available to download for free from [www.salto-youth.net/Toolbox/](http://www.salto-youth.net/Toolbox/) and [www.youth-partnership.net](http://www.youth-partnership.net)

## THE YOUTH IN ACTION PROGRAMME



The Youth in Action programme is the European Union's **mobility and non-formal education programme** for young people and those working with them, in a leisure time context (outside school). The YiA programme promotes active European citizenship, youth participation, cultural diversity and the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities.

The Youth in Action programme offers various opportunities for young people to set up projects with an **international dimension**: e.g. group exchanges, voluntary service, democracy projects, group initiatives. It also provides funding for support activities for youth workers to increase the quality of their youth projects.

The Youth in Action Programme is open to young people and youth workers in the so-called '**Programme Countries**'. These are (currently) the EU members, the EFTA countries (Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein) and the pre-accession country (only Turkey for the moment, more could join). There are some (limited) possibilities to set up projects with neighbouring partner countries (South-East Europe, Eastern Europe & Caucasus and the EuroMed countries around the Mediterranean Sea) and beyond.

There are **several types of projects** that can receive funding. The funding rules of the Youth in Action programme are largely based on a simple system of flat rates and fixed amounts, depending on the number of participants, the activity, its duration, etc.

- Youth Exchanges (*where groups of young people come together*)
- Group Initiatives (*local projects originating from youth groups*)
- Democracy Projects (*encouraging young people to take part in democracy*)
- European Voluntary Service (*young people volunteer in another country*)
- Training & Networking for youth workers (*training, seminars, job-shadowing, feasibility visits, partnership building, evaluation meetings, etc.*)

👉 Find out more about the Youth in Action programme in the **Programme Guide** which you can download from [http://ec.europa.eu/youth/yia/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/yia/index_en.html) or contact the YiA National Agency in your country: [http://ec.europa.eu/youth/contact\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/contact_en.html)

## THE YOUTH IN ACTION PROGRAMME & LESBIGAY YOUTH

The YiA programme should be **open for 'ALL' young people**. And if certain groups of young people with fewer opportunities are not reached, special efforts should be made to create easier access for underrepresented groups of young people from minorities, such as LesBiGay youth, to the opportunities offered by Youth in Action.

It can be argued in some countries that LesBiGay young people are not a “group with fewer opportunities”. However, in other countries, LesBiGay youth (groups) are clearly at risk of discrimination, violence, mental health problems (e.g. coming-out problems, suicide, depression, etc.). Whatever opinions about the status of LesBiGay youth may be, a fact is that in many European, the YiA programme is not used by LesBiGay young people or groups. In this sense, LesBiGay youth is one of the **'inclusion groups'**.

**Inclusion** of 'young people with fewer opportunities' is one of the **priorities** of the YiA programme. This means in practice that between two equally good projects, the selection committee would give priority to the project that includes disadvantaged youth (provided that you explain well why your participants are at disadvantage). Besides this 'extra focus', there are also a number of **extra measures** that make it easier for 'inclusion groups' to do a YiA project.

Of course the **same general rules** apply for you as for any Youth in Action project, but you can get some **extra support** for an Inclusion project, if justified.

- **Exceptional costs:** if you have extra costs because you are working with disadvantaged groups, you can claim these expenses in your application e.g. extra costs for security (if the project takes place in a hostile environment), special medical care in case of HIV+ participants, or other justifiable additional costs due to the specifics of undertaking a LesBiGay project...
- **In Youth Exchanges**, bilateral exchanges (between only 2 countries) are reserved for new organisations or inclusion groups. This allows you to do 'simpler' project (fewer countries) because you have other complications due to the specificity of your target group.
- You can apply for an **Advanced Planning Visit** to prepare the inclusion project with your partner organisations, to organise the exchange in the best possible way, have a look at the gay-friendliness in the host country and find solutions to potential risks and problems.
- **Youth initiatives** run by disadvantaged young people (projects for them by them) are allowed to have a youth worker **coaching** them when needed (and extra money for this).

- The regular duration of a **European Voluntary Service project** is between 2 and 12 months. However, for inclusion projects this can be for periods of **2 weeks onwards**, up to a maximum of 12 months, if there are valid reasons for it.
  - There is the possibility of making an **Advanced Planning Visit**, together with the disadvantaged volunteer, to get acquainted with the EVS hosting organisation, the support system and project.
  - If the LesBiGay EVS volunteer needs extra attention, **reinforced mentorship** can be funded, if requested and justified in the application form. This would cover the cost of having a mentor assist the LesBiGay volunteer e.g. with special needs, poor mental health, coming-out related issues, etc. Also the volunteer can be younger than 18 (16 or 17) if there are reasons for it.
  - When preparing a project, it is possible to use the so-called support activities of the YiA programme for the youth workers supporting the LesBiGay youth or those organising the projects with/for them (e.g. feasibility studies, job-shadowing, contact making seminars, study visits, etc.). This would come under a separate project and funding application however. Or you can participate in someone else's project first ("Joining other projects first - first step" p 40).
- ☞ Every country in Europe is different. Therefore your Youth in Action National Agency will have to judge if your **requests are reasonable**, considering the 'disadvantage' of your LesBiGay young people in your context. It's up to you to explain why you need extra support and funding..
  - ☞ More about specific measures for inclusion in the European Commission's '**Inclusion Strategy for the Youth in Action programme**' at [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InclusionStrategy/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InclusionStrategy/)

The NAs are there to inform you (in your own language) about the possibilities available and they can help you with your project ideas or suggest attending information sessions or training activities. Every NA also has an Inclusion Officer that works specifically to include underrepresented groups and people with special needs in the YiA programme. Most of the NAs also have people from 'inclusion organisations' on their selection committees.

## EXAMPLES OF LESBIGAY YOUTH PROJECTS IN THE (FORMER) YOUTH PROGRAMME

### EXPLORING LESBIAN GAY BISEXUAL & TRANSGENDER YOUTH IDENTITIES IN A CULTURAL & HISTORICAL CONTEXT – A YOUTH EXCHANGE



In 2005, an exchange took place between two youth organisations working with LGBT youth in Sweden and Ireland. The project was composed of two exchanges. The first exchange project took place in Stockholm in August, and the second in Dublin in November.

★ Note: It is not necessary to have a “second leg” in an exchange. The exchange happens between the groups in one country. It is up to the partners to decide to have a second exchange (and a second application for funding).

#### The organisations:

**BeLoNG To Youth Project** (Dublin, Ireland) was set up in December 2002 to work with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) young people in Ireland. It provides one-to-one and group support for young people, aged 14-23, to allow them to safely engage with confidence building, personal development, peer support and making friends. It also affords young people a space where they can experience inclusion, acceptance, social justice, fun and safety. As such, it is the first and only project of its kind in Ireland.

Website: [www.belongto.org](http://www.belongto.org) E-mail: [belongto@eircom.net](mailto:belongto@eircom.net)

**RFSL Ungdom** (Stockholm, Sweden) is the only national LGBT youth organisation in Sweden. Its goals are to fight discrimination of young lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people; build the self-confidence of young people; organise education and social activities for LGBT youth. Not only LGBT, but also heterosexual non-transgender youth are among the members of RFSL Ungdom. Every young person, who thinks that all young people should have equal rights are very welcome to join.

Website: [www.rfslungdom.com](http://www.rfslungdom.com) E-mail: [info@rfslungdom.se](mailto:info@rfslungdom.se)

#### The Exchange

The aim of the exchange was to focus on the **historical and cultural context of LGBT identity**. In doing so, it is hoped that young people are facilitated in placing their identities within a rich international context. The importance of this lies in reclaiming a history and culture which has been marginalised and rendered invisible by centuries of homophobia and discrimination.

The **methods and activities** used in the exchange included presentations by young people on aspects of LGBT history and culture in their own countries, discussions prompted by the presentations, role playing, art, meeting key figures from the LGBT community in each country, social activities, excursions, and visits to sites of cultural and historical importance. At each stage of the exchange, individuals from the visiting group prepared and delivered presentations on a variety of topics around the theme of LGBT identity.

The **benefits** of the exchange were evident from the first contact between the groups. Participants found that they had a lot in common; many similar experiences and attitudes, and a lot to share in terms of different cultural perspectives and differences in how the two organisations worked. The overall experience of the exchange for the two organisations and for the participants, was very positive. It contributed to the following:

- A new understanding of the experiences of LGBT people in different social, cultural and political contexts was gained by all participants.
- The experience of meeting significant public figures involved in LGBT rights and politics was mentioned by all participants as having a particularly strong impact.
- Also beneficial was the opportunity to discuss the LGBT civil rights movements in each country, and of gaining an understanding of the different paces of change and different stages involved in affecting change dictated by specific cultural and historical circumstances.
- Placing sexual identity in a positive cultural and historical context was one of the core aims of this exchange, and in this it was very successful.
- The experience of meeting each other was also one of the major benefits of the exchange, and a significant element in the learning which took place through the whole experience.

The exchange seemed to have been a **valuable learning experience** for all those involved. And if there were difficulties, these were overcome through dialogue, and did not appear to affect the energy of the groups.

#### LGBT YOUTH INTERNATIONAL – A EUROPEAN VOLUNTARY SERVICE



**RFSL Ungdom** (Swedish youth federation for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people - see above) hosted two consecutive volunteers (starting October 2004) within the European Voluntary Service (EVS) programme.

The first volunteer came from the Romanian LGBT organisation ACCEPT, the second one from Roter-Baum a social work organisation for young people in Germany.

- ★ Note: When hosting **several volunteers** at the same time there is the possibility to apply for a “group EVS”. In the case of RFSL Ungdom, they applied for 2 separate volunteers at different times.



### The EVS Project

The volunteer project “LGBT youth international” was set up within RFSL Ungdom to stimulate the involvement of young lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in **international projects and co-operation**.

The volunteers worked in different ways (through meetings, taster-activities, mailings, campaigns, etc.) to encourage the local branches of the RFSL Ungdom federation to **take part in international work**. Another one of their tasks was to develop different co-operation projects with LGBT youth groups throughout the rest of Europe. This project and the work of the volunteers helped to **overcome social exclusion and underrepresentation** of young lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in the field of European youth co-operation.

As a result of the volunteers’ contributions there was an **increase in participation** in international activities by RFSL Ungdom’s member organisations and they even set up some international activities of their own. The volunteers helped to drive the organisations forward and provided additional resources for the organisations’ international work.

Another benefit was a **very productive living and learning experience** for the volunteers themselves. The contact created between the volunteers and the Swedish youth workers was worthwhile. And not only that. One of the volunteers was straight. She said: “Actually, I don’t see any big difference between working with gay or straight young people”. RFSL Ungdom is willing to repeat their EVS experience. Suggestions are welcome at [evs@rfslungdom.se](mailto:evs@rfslungdom.se) Website: [www.rfslungdom.com](http://www.rfslungdom.com)

### GROUP INITIATIVE: ME & THE WORLD

**Jong & HiB** (Young and Holebi in Bruges, Belgium) is a voluntary organisation with the aim of setting up LesBiGay youth work in the area surrounding Bruges. Most of its members and volunteers are young people with experience in youth work or are working in the non-profit sector. The organisation plays a role in raising awareness, giving information and one-on-one counselling regarding lesbian, gay and bisexual issues. They organise a variety of activities such as youth parties, a queer film month, info stands, etc.

Website: [www.j-h.be](http://www.j-h.be) E-mail: [info@j-h.be](mailto:info@j-h.be)



### The Project

Making mainstream **youth organisations accessible** to “specific target groups” was one of the priorities of the city’s youth council. This was the starting point from which “Jong & HiB” developed a project about diversity.

A group of Jong & HiB members established a project entitled “**Ik & De Wereld**” (Me & the World). This project received funding from the European YOUTH programme as a Group Initiative since inclusion and diversity are priority topics of the programme. The aim of the Group Initiative was to develop tools and methods for young people and youth workers from different youth organisations to work on themes like gender, sexuality and diversity within their organisations.

They developed a **set of fun activities** to stimulate young people (14-17 year olds) to think about issues such as cultural difference, racism, sexual orientation, gender and what it means to be accepted or excluded. Activities included preparing a dish, a scene from a play, a scene from a film, a photo game and an obstacle race. Following the activities time was put aside for feedback and reflection.

Youth organisations were able to reserve the “**Ik & De Wereld**” **activity carousel** for their members free of charge. The Jong & HiB volunteers ran these sessions, accompanied by professional workers from specialised organisations. It was possible to adapt the activities to the needs and interests of the organisation, and youth workers of mainstream organisations were also allowed to take part in training sessions to learn how to organise the “Me & the World”-activities themselves.

These activities gave the young people in the youth organisations an opportunity to reflect on their own **stereotypes and prejudices**. They had to come to their own conclusions when confronted with different situations in the activity carousel. This often increased their tolerance levels and one of the outcomes of the project was that young people had more acceptance of their peers. In each case, it raised many different issues that otherwise would never have been discussed.

More project examples in the SALTO project database at [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InnovativeProjects/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InnovativeProjects/) or in the European Commission’s inspirational booklet “**Including ALL with the YiA programme**” [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InclusionInspiration/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InclusionInspiration/)

# DEALING WITH LESBIGAY INTERNATIONAL



# ISSUES IN PROJECTS

Organising LesBiGay youth activities requires specific reflection and planning. Several elements should be taken into consideration in order to cater for the specific needs of the target group.

*Besides the specifics of LesBiGay projects below, you can find inspiration for your programme of activities in the SALTO Toolbox for Youth Work and Training at*

*[www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Toolbox/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Toolbox/): get-to-know games, simulation games, group methods, energisers, exercises addressing social in/exclusion and discrimination,...*

## SPECIFICS OF THE TARGET GROUP

### COMING-OUT

“Coming-out of the closet” is the term commonly used to describe when a homosexual openly states his or her homosexuality to parents, peers, employers, etc. Because of personal insecurity and the fear of negative reactions and homophobia it can be a **long and difficult process** before LesBiGay young people decide to do their ‘coming out’, first to themselves (by accepting and acting on their feelings) and then to others. ‘Coming-out’ is a very **personal issue**, with many steps involved. Some young people come out first of all to their friends, and only after some years to their parents and others, and to some they’ll never tell (grandparents, employers,...). Other people decide to come out to everyone at the same time.

The question of ‘coming-out’ is important when organising an activity with and for young LesBiGay people. Many young people, though actively involved in LesBiGay youth organisations are **not necessarily ‘out’**. They may feel comfortable in the company of other LesBiGay peers, however this doesn’t necessarily imply that they feel ready to come out to other people outside of this closed circle. It is a personal decision that every gay man or woman must take for themselves and this process should not be rushed.

- ☞ More about **Coming-Out** in “Different in more ways than one. Providing guidance for teenagers on their way to identity, sexuality and respect” [www.diversity-in-europe.org](http://www.diversity-in-europe.org) (tips for youth workers and counsellors working with LesBiGay youth, background information, exercises, FAQ, stories, etc.)

It may be possible that some participants in your international activity are not 'out' yet. Therefore, it is important to make sure when planning the activity that those young people are **not "outed" by accident** (e.g. by putting the group's picture in the local newspaper after a youth exchange, by circulating names or address lists without asking, making information available on the Internet, etc.). You also need to take special care about how you promote or describe the project, e.g. if you ask parents to allow their son or daughter to take part in a 'homosexual project' it may provoke a more negative reaction than would be the case if the project was described as 'a cultural project against discrimination'.

You should bring up this issue in the **preparation phase** of your project and ask participants to reflect on this question and come up with some suggestions on how to deal with this issue. You could have a more neutral project description for people outside your organisation and a rainbow coloured one for your own members. You might decide to use nicknames for participants during the project (i.e. in address lists) and blend out faces on photos to show to others the difficulties some young people face in coming out. The same topics would more than likely have to be discussed also with the partner organisation.

### CREATING A SAFE & SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

LesBiGay young people are similar to any other group of adolescents. They are creating their identities by finding their place in a group and in society. This issue is all the more **sensitive** if the question of their sexual orientation and identity is not cleared out yet, or if it causes additional stress in their lives, at school, with their parents, families or friends. They might have experienced bullying or harassment in school, or might feel an overwhelming pressure from parents, friends and society to adhere to the norms of society, to refrain from expressing their feelings or emotions and as a result might feel **vulnerable** in groups.

Youth workers have a role to play in creating a safe and supportive environment for these young people. They can **stimulate group dynamics** by proposing activities in which the young people get to know each other better, in which they will need to co-operate or discuss or in which they have fun together, e.g. group discussions on specific topics, an outing to an amusement park, undertaking fundraising activities together, etc. The youth worker should take care of the **needs and sensitivities** of the group and ask young people to respect these, e.g. reject abusive language, avoid excluding members of the group, create a space in which sensitive issues can be discussed, etc. A climate of dialogue and respect is beneficial to the wellbeing of the young people.

International projects involve expanding our limits by **challenging ourselves** and discovering how we react to new situations. This, however, should not be an excuse to force young people to do things they don't feel comfortable with. The rest of the group might feel happy doing street theatre or marching for LesBiGay rights, but some young people might not. It is up to the youth worker to protect individuals from **peer pressure** and to give everybody the **possibility to opt out**.

### My Limits & Longings

During the preparation of an international project (or at the beginning of the actual project) you could address people's fears and wishes in relation to the project. Ask participants to put their **Limits** (what they would not like to do or to happen during the exchange, their fears) and their **Longings** (what they would love to see happening during the exchange, their wishes) on pieces of paper (anonymously) and drop them in a message box. You could use different colours for the Limits (e.g. red) and the Longings (e.g. green, like a traffic light).

The facilitator regroups them during a break and reads them out. The participants could try to come up with titles for the different categories of Limits and Longings. These could be the basis for a group contract about how the group should respect and support each other in relation to their fears and wishes.



from SALTO TC Rainbow

It is important to **debrief emotional activities** that some participants may have difficulties with e.g. speaking in front of a class, showing affection to someone of the same gender in public, etc. There needs to be a time and a space to discuss **misunderstandings, friction and frustrations**. You can decide to do this on a one-to-one basis, or in smaller groups which could be mixed or based on a common characteristic (e.g. gender, nationality, sexuality) or in whatever form is most comfortable for the participants. Talking can defuse many conflicts and problems.

## RELATIONS WITHIN THE GROUP(S)

It would not be the first time that the gay guys complain about ‘the lesbians’ or that the bisexuals are told to ‘make up their minds’. The LesBiGay community could be regarded as a rainbow of different groups, and these groups don’t necessarily get along just because they all happen to be “not heterosexual”. Many young LesBiGay people hold **prejudices** against other LesBiGay subgroups.



*from olleke.be*

During an international youth project, where there are young lesbians, gays and bisexuals living, working and having fun together almost 24 hours a day, **tiredness** can kick in and tensions can surface. At such moments it is very tempting to start complaining about ‘the gay guys’ or ‘the lesbians’, or similarly about the group from a certain country, especially if there are unbalanced proportions of one or the other group. It is important to put aside enough free time in your project to **digest and rest**.

It is important to **create a good atmosphere** where the different groups, be it different nationalities, different genders or different sexualities, can interact in a pleasant and respectful manner. For certain elements in your programme, e.g. sexual health, young gays might have more to share with each other than with the lesbian girls. For this reason it might be wiser to hold discussions **apart**. On the other hand, the different groups might also **learn from one another**, e.g. associative life, anti-discrimination, etc. Ensure that your programme has a mixture of opportunities to bring different nationalities and people with different sexual orientations together as well as opportunities for discussion between like-minded people. When tensions mount between groups it is important to diffuse them quickly. Here are some little exercises that could help you:

### Caricatures of sexualities

Break up the participants in small groups of the same sexual orientation, and ask them to **prepare a sketch** that exaggerates to the max, the stereotypes people have about people with a different sexual orientation. Usually this creates lots of laughs, and it becomes quite clear that the real people are nothing like the stereotypes. Make sure that the groups don't make fun of one, maybe fragile person of the group in particular, but that they remain on a general level.

### The 15 minute bullshit

During a period of 15 minutes, all participants will have the possibility to comment on the others, in particular the opposite gender. This is a quarter of an hour of 'time-out'. What is said during these 15 minutes should not be taken seriously and should be completely forgotten after the exercise. You can present this activity in a dramatic way – like an Oprah Winfrey or Jerry Springer show.

Ask all the girls to state their **stereotypes and prejudices** about bisexual and gay men, in particular what they observed during the first few days of the exchange. Then do the same in the opposite direction. It gives everybody the chance to empty their hearts and get rid of their frustrations. It also gives the people in the group an indication of how they are perceived by the others.



from SALTO TC Rainbow

It is important to **debrief** this activity carefully. Ask all participants to share their feelings (*How do you feel now? How does it feel to say all those things? To hear them?*) and ask them to identify the purpose of this activity (*Why do you think we are doing this? Why now?*). You can wrap up the activity by underlining the fact that we all hold prejudices and stereotypes about the other and that we should be aware of them and progressively deconstruct them.



## SHARING ROOMS

Traditionally, in order to avoid **intimate contacts** between the young participants in a youth project, males and females do not share rooms. When dealing with a LesBiGay youth group this traditional solution is not valid. What's the alternative?

Instead of avoiding the question of **sexual relationships** during an exchange, presumably solved by splitting up the boys from the girls, the question should, on the contrary, be addressed. Unless you have the finances available to provide each participant with a single room, there is no other option but to have the young people share a room with someone. This could be a basis for a direct and frank **discussion** with the participants about relationships and responsibilities, about safe sex and clever behaviour. This could lead to a **code of conduct**, signed by all (if you think it necessary or useful).

👉 More about sexual health and relationships at [www.gmh.org.uk](http://www.gmh.org.uk) (under Support) or [www.gay.com/health/](http://www.gay.com/health/) or on many other LesBiGay sites



*from olleke.be*

Ideally the partner organisations should work towards a **shared code of conduct**. It could be very interesting to compare the various codes of conduct of the different partner organisations (both the organisations' policies AND the young people's views). What are the similarities and differences between the suggested codes and why? Some organisations may come up with a list of forbidden behaviour, while others simply list what is allowed. The penalties imposed when breaking the rules can vary. Are there cultural aspects that might influence these differing approaches?

### TO BE OR NOT TO BE ... OF AGE

Young people that are underage (under 18 in most European countries) need the **authorisation, sometimes in writing**, of their parents or legal guardians in order to participate in an international youth project. In this instance the youth worker has a lot more responsibility in relation to the young people than if they were 18 and older and participated in the project as young adults. Underage participants have wider implications than this however.

It might be the case that underage participants are **'not out'** to their parents. This makes it more difficult when asking the young participants to have their parents sign a **declaration of consent** in order to be legally allowed to go on an international project under the care of the youth organisation. It would be bad practice to lie about the project (parents usually find out anyway!), but you could opt to give your project an innocuous name that wouldn't shock the parents e.g. Art against discrimination, Alternative youth cultures, etc.

Even if the underage participants are 'out' to their parents, they still might have many doubts about allowing their son or daughter participate because of a fear of the **'sexual freedom'** their child might be exposed to abroad, or because of doubts about the organisation or its leadership. The youth workers have a vital role to play in the way they present the project so that parents are encouraged, by the **quality and seriousness** of the undertaking, to allow their children benefit from this international opportunity.

- 👉 Read more about the **benefits** of a LesBiGay project on page 12 – you could use these as an aid in convincing parents to allow their son or daughter participate in the project

Find out about the **fears** parents have that prevent them from allowing their son or daughter participate in an international project and provide them with sufficient information and guarantees on how you will deal with any dubious situations that may arise. You could perhaps share with them the **code of conduct** that you agreed with the potential participants of the project. The parents might also be interested to know about the **experiences and qualifications** of the youth workers that will be coordinating the project. These can be provided easily. You can keep them informed about, or even involve them in, the **preparation** of the project so that they know exactly what is going on and how the project is being managed. Parents can, over time, come to understand the rationale behind the project, appreciate the benefits it holds for their own son or daughter and overcome their reluctance to participate. It can, however, take a lot of time and work to convince them.

## SPECIFICS OF THE HOST COUNTRY

### DIFFERENT REALITIES

Europe is a mosaic of differences and commonalities. When you plan an activity in a different country it is necessary to be aware of the **specificities and realities** of the host country. In some countries, being gay, lesbian or bisexual can still be a very difficult life to lead. European legislation makes discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation illegal, but many governments and especially people's mentalities have not always evolved in the same direction. It is important to **get a feel for the situation** in the host country, about what is possible, what the risks are and how you can best deal with them.

If the situation in the host country is **less favourable** for LesBiGay people than in your own country, you will need to prepare your group accordingly, especially when in public places. To counterbalance this you may need to create a form of **safe haven** for your participants where they can be themselves more freely (e.g. by using a gay friendly hotel, going to gay bars, etc.). It might not appeal to you or to the members in your group to have to conceal your sexual identities, however you must take your own **safety** and that of your host into consideration. You may feel the need to make bold statements publicly at the beginning of the exchange in order to try to change people's views, however you should keep in mind that the host organisation will have to contend with any hostility you may have created long after you have returned home.

If, on the other hand, the host country is very open-minded regarding LesBiGay issues, you will also have to prepare your participants for this. Some participants might not want to show their homosexuality openly, they might be reluctant to participate in **public events** (parades, media coverage, etc.). As already mentioned, it is important to create a **safe environment** in which people feel they can participate or opt out when they wish to do so. It is important to keep this in mind when developing the programme for your project together with your partner organisation.

Another learning experience for the young participants could be the differences between LesBiGay life in the cities and rural areas. In general, people in **bigger cities** are more used to seeing LesBiGay people than those living in **smaller villages**. You will need to prepare your participants accordingly, depending on where the project takes place. If your project is organised in a big city, the young people might feel overwhelmed by the freedom and openness they witness. On the other hand, the young people might also be surprised by the ways in which LesBiGay organisations use creative ways to manage their activities in rural areas.

### The LesBiGay explorer

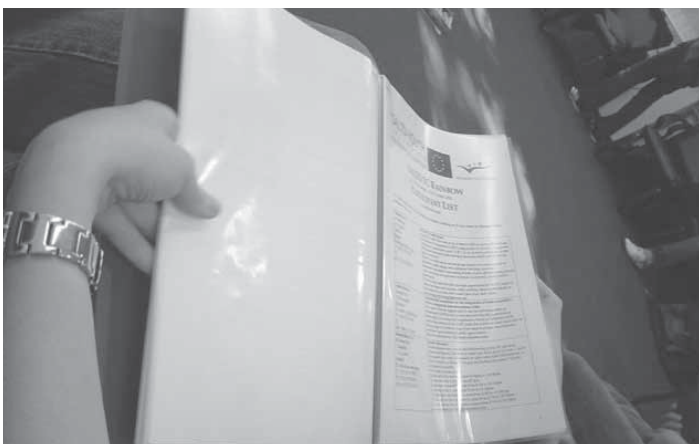
In order for the young people from the various partner groups to prepare themselves for the exchange they must get an **insight into the LesBiGay reality of the other country**. You could ask participants to gather information about their partner countries (e.g. from the internet).

Some examples:

- What is the legal situation of LesBiGay people?
- Do organisations exist for young LesBiGay people?
- Is there a specialised magazine/newspaper for Gays, Lesbians or Bisexuals?
- How does the media report on LesBiGay issues?
- Etc.

Another activity which could be organised between the partner groups is to ask each other, via e-mail, letters or fax, what would be the result of the following in their country:

- if two men kiss in the street
- if two women raise a child together
- if an employer fires a worker on account of being LesBiGay
- if you tell your parents that you are LesBiGay
- etc.



*from SALTO TC Rainbow*

- ★ Note that they should be similarly informed as regards drinking laws (strict in some countries, more relaxed in others), drugs use (e.g. coffee shops in the Netherlands), health & safety measures (legal implications in certain countries), etc.

## CREATING LINKS WITH THE LOCAL LESBIGAY COMMUNITY

One of the key aspects of any intercultural exchange involves learning about the local reality, and in this case in particular the **local LesBiGay community**. Young people participating in an international LesBiGay youth project will more than likely be interested in discovering and understanding the LesBiGay milieu. One way of doing this could be to organise activities together with the local community, organise meetings with some of the organisations or participate in some of their events (e.g. film evening, nature walk, creative workshops, etc.).

Be aware, however, that the arrival of a large group of LesBiGay people might have an **overwhelming impact** on a small organisation or community. The people participating in the exchange programme might have less inhibitions as a result of being away from home, but the partner organisations and their members might not share the same feeling. Therefore, it is important to give the hosts enough **information** about who is coming and what the aim of the project is, so that the organisations that you visit are well prepared and know what to expect, as well as that which they could see themselves offering.

Similarly, as football fans enjoy meeting other football fans when abroad at a match, LesBiGay people appreciate visiting and participating in the “**lesbian and gay scene**”. It will depend of course on the age of the participants whether this can be allowed or not during your exchange. You could, for example, organise a party in one of the local bars/clubs.

The **LesBiGay scene** itself can vary greatly between different countries and cities, which is one of the **attractions** of it. It could also be a reason to prepare participants for what they will find, especially if visiting some dubious **or dangerous clubs/pubs**, e.g. some bars might be well-known for drug use, others could be sex-oriented, or there could be a danger of attacks on homosexuals in certain areas. Your local partner organisation can probably advise you on which places are best avoided.

If there is a lively nightlife in the town or city there is always a possibility that your participants might head out on the town regularly and perhaps show up later or less often for your daily work sessions. Keep this in mind during the preparation of the project, and come to an **agreement** with the young people involved on the hours that they should be present working on the project and on how much free time they will be allowed. It is always wise to have a healthy balance.

## TAKING TO THE STREETS

During the course of a youth exchange or international activity, occasions can arise when the participants might want to react, via a **demonstration or other action**, to homophobic remarks or actions faced by the local LesBiGay community. More often than not, religious groups, political groups or other social players publicly express their discontent at having their city welcome events of this kind. It can also happen that the young people who are being hosted in the city will come face-to-face with discrimination and intolerance during their stay and may wish to respond. These protests are often spontaneous and passionate rather than well thought through.

Before taking to the streets, however, it is extremely vital to check what the **legal provisions** governing public demonstrations are in order to avoid or limit the potential legal risks faced by individuals or the organisations involved. In some countries, certain public spaces cannot be used for demonstration purposes without the approval of the local authority (e.g. squares, streets close to embassies or local councils). In other countries, those who are underage are not allowed to be on the streets during certain periods and cannot participate in demonstrations without parental approval. At other times, the organisations who organise the demonstrations are solely responsible for any damage that might occur.

- 👉 Better safe than sorry! There may exist alternative ways to channel your requirements or frustrations. Take a look at **Making the most of LesBiGay projects** on page 82.



## INTERCULTURAL LESBIGAY LEARNING

One of the most exciting things about international projects is the **discovery of new countries and cultures**, witnessing that there are different ways to respond to certain situations, e.g. different habits, customs, values, ways of interacting. This can put your own way of doing things in **perspective** and equips you with **intercultural skills** that make it easier to deal with differences or to look at things from a different angle. Intercultural learning is the process of acquiring knowledge, skills and attitudes that are essential in order to be able to function in a multicultural environment.

You can stimulate **intercultural learning** in your project in a variety of ways. During the preparation phase of your project you could ask the participants to find information about the other countries or cultures involved. They can remain on the **surface** by finding information on food, music, dress, etc., or they can delve **deeper** by finding more information on people's values, political views, taboos, interactions, etc. They can use the Internet to locate information or by contacting the other group(s).

During the exchange itself, it is important to schedule activities in which participants get a chance to **show off their respective cultures**. This could be in the form of an intercultural evening where the different countries present local food, drink, dance, games, costumes, etc. The participants also have the possibility of seeing each other react in a variety of situations by **mixing young people** from different countries in working groups, in shared bedrooms, at the dinner table, etc. Their behaviour in these everyday situations could be the same or differ slightly. It is important that the youth workers provide a **space for reflection**, either in national or mixed groups, to share and come to terms with the cultural differences. It is especially important, when the participants are experiencing a feeling of **culture shock** (i.e. not knowing how to interact with people from another culture), that they are given a chance to release any pent-up emotions and to restructure their thoughts in a positive way. This conscious effort of reflecting is an essential step toward productive intercultural learning, as it provides a basis for discussion and exchange beyond anecdotal or cosmetic facts.

- 👉 You can find out more about intercultural learning in the Training-Kit on Intercultural Learning [www.youth-partnership.net](http://www.youth-partnership.net) and there are a variety of intercultural learning exercises to be found in SALTO's Toolbox for Training [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Toolbox/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Toolbox/)



from SALTO TC Rainbow

Another interesting topic for your international LesBiGay youth project could be whether the young people from the different countries feel they have more in common with each other because of their homosexuality than they would otherwise have. Does a **LesBiGay culture exist across borders**? Is the fact that you are lesbian or gay enough to build a friendship on? LesBiGay encounters are definitely sources of great **learning and discovery**!

## SPECIFICS OF THE YOUTH WORKER SKILLS FOR HANDLING LESBIGAY ISSUES

On LesBiGay youth activities, as is the case on all international activities, there is a need for skilful youth workers who are able to **manage the project** by taking care and overseeing all aspects of it, such as intercultural learning, co-operation, youth participation, etc., as well as the **technical aspects** such as funding, reporting, bookkeeping, etc. Without sacrificing the technical competencies needed from youth workers, it is also essential to insist on having **social or soft skills** when dealing with this specific target group.

The youth workers, whether volunteers or employed, who coordinate international youth projects should be **experienced and skilled** in understanding and working with **LesBiGay youth**. Ideally, the youth workers should be familiar with all personal and interrelational aspects of homosexuality (i.e. identity, self-acceptance, coming-out etc.). That which young LesBiGays experience on an international activity can have a **strong impact, either positive or negative**, on their personal development. Listed on page 12 of this booklet you will find its benefits for LesBiGay youth. The youth workers are responsible for **structuring and coordinating this experience** for the young people and they should make it as beneficial as possible to them.

As well as being sensitive toward young LesBiGays' needs and developmental processes, the youth worker must also be **conscious** of their own **role and limitations**. None of us is a superman or a superwoman, so it is perfectly normal to require training to improve some of your skills. Check by yourself or with your colleagues as regards what your strengths and weaknesses are. You will more than likely be working in a team of youth workers, so different topics can be covered by different members of the team depending on their strengths.



## PROVIDING POSITIVE ROLE MODELS

The youth worker is continuously on stage and observed by the members of the group. Many LesBiGay young people are searching for **role models**; people they would like to become when they are older. Since you are in charge of the project and must coordinate the whole experience, you may well be regarded as a role model by some of the participants. Providing a **positive example** of how one can behave as an adult could be very instrumental for young people in the construction of their identities, especially if you are of the same sexual orientation. It gives them hope that they might also become like you. This can **stimulate and motivate** young people to accept themselves, to construct a positive image of themselves, to stand up for their rights and to dream of a positive future.

Youth workers are carefully **observed** during an exchange programme, especially in their way of handling different situations. It is important to always give a good example by being **genuine and respectful**. The youth worker can set the tone by using gender neutral wording (e.g. spokesperson instead of spokesman, etc.), by refusing heteronormative speech (e.g. married partners instead of husband and wife), by reacting firmly to homophobic comments or verbal abuse, by being respectful of differences, etc. Don't forget that a little humour can always help avoid depression. It is very likely that young people will aim to **imitate an appreciated youth worker**.

Youth workers are in a position of **power and responsibility** toward the young people in their care. Sometimes this power or a role model may appear attractive to young people and they may feel they have fallen in love. In other instances they may just be trying to provoke the youth worker. It would be all too easy to reciprocate the attention given to the youth worker by the young people. A youth worker is responsible for the whole group and giving too much attention to one of the participants, or to one of the team for that matter, will unavoidably detract attention and energy from the group. Therefore, it is **unethical and unprofessional**, and illegal in the case of underage participants, to start a relationship with one of the participants in a project. Youth workers and volunteers who are supporting young people with their sexual orientation and coming-out should set clear boundaries and rules about this **transgression of roles**.

## LET'S TALK ABOUT SEX

A person is made up of more than his or her sexuality. A lesbian also has a national or cultural identity, hobbies, a student or professional background, etc. Nevertheless, it is sometimes worthwhile bringing **LesBiGay peers** together in a safe environment where they can openly discuss issues that specifically matter to them. In the case of LesBiGay youth this involves **homosexual or bisexual love, relationships and sex**.



*from SALTO TC Rainbow*

A youth worker who must deal with LesBiGay youth needs to be **comfortable** with and **knowledgeable** on **LesBiGay sexuality**. This subject will undoubtedly surface on several occasions during a LesBiGay project. It is important that the youth worker is kept up-to-date with the latest developments as regards **sexual development and sexual health**. It might also be considered wise to organise an information session or debate on safe sex. You may even consider distributing condoms amongst the participants for the purpose of safety. This, however, might be considered by parents, funding providers or politicians as the promotion of sexual acts amongst young people. It is up to you to argue the case in favour of **safe sex** and to judge the situation accordingly. You could discuss the issue with the participants and add some rules to the code of conduct for the project.

- ☞ **“Different in more ways than one. Providing guidance for teenagers on their way to identity, sexuality and respect”** is a publication about working with LesBiGay youth. It includes background reading and practical exercises (on LGBT & identity, sexuality, religion, subcultures, health,...). Download it from [www.diversity-in-europe.org](http://www.diversity-in-europe.org).
- ☞ [www.advocatesforyouth.org](http://www.advocatesforyouth.org) is an American organisation and website that aims to help young people to make informed and responsible decisions about their **reproductive and sexual health**. Advocates provides information, training and publications to youth-serving organizations, policy makers, youth activists, and the media – amongst others also about LGBTQ issues.

# MAKING OF LESBIGAY



# THE MOST PROJECTS

You may have decided to organise an international LesBiGay project and have worked hard to make it happen. It would be such a pity that after so much effort all the potential the project has to offer was not used to make a little change in society. The aims you set out in the beginning in the Planning & Defining stage (see page 16) should remain your **primary aims** and the focus of your project, however if you have some time and energy to spare, you the youth worker, together with the participants, could go that one step further with your project. For example:

## POSITIVE IMAGE BUILDING

The first question you must ask yourself is what a positive image is? Many debates are held around the question of “**portraying a positive image of homosexuality**”. This discussion frequently arises regarding Pride parades. Some people are of the opinion that homosexuals should behave “normally”, meaning that they should conceal any external signs of their homosexuality, by either not being too feminine or too masculine, as the case may be, and by not showing any signs of affection in public, etc. Other people, however, are also of the opinion that homosexuals should behave “normally”, but they imply the exact opposite i.e. that each and every one of us should behave however we feel comfortable with.

The issue at stake here is probably how to **change or refine the image** that “society” at large has of LesBiGay people. You as a group can of course help this process by changing the image that people whom you meet during your exchange has of homosexuality. It is probably worthwhile **giving a diverse image** of homosexuals and bisexuals in order to refine the stereotypes people hold when they encounter a gay or a lesbian. Chances are that you will have a cross section of different people in your group.

**Stereotyping** is a way in which we simplify things in order to make sense of the world. It is impossible to know everything and everybody, so we construct categories to classify people according to a mental stereotype. ‘Gay’, ‘lesbian’ or ‘bisexual’ are categories of this kind, based on experiences that certain people have had with these groups or on that which certain people have seen in the media. The media usually focuses on the more peculiar or controversial activities of LesBiGay people. These stereotypical images will remain in people’s minds until they encounter a situation in which these general images are **challenged**, in which the stereotypical image they hold clearly does not fit the reality.

It is possible to challenge people's stereotypes through your project, not through intensive brainwashing but by taking the opportunity to **interact positively with people**. Have a chat with the staff at the venue, show your appreciation to the people that help you organise your activity (e.g. bus drivers, delivery men or women, local authorities, staff, etc.), give them information on what your project is about, show them the differences in your group, co-operate with or send invitations to non-LesBiGay organisations, hold a talk on stereotypes, etc. All that is required is to **be friendly and open** towards the people you meet during the course of your project and chances are that the image they have of LesBiGay people will become a positive one.

If you want to avoid that people form stereotypes about LesBiGay people, then you should perhaps be conscious of the effect that the **activities** you undertake could have in stimulating these stereotypes. Of course you don't have to cancel the drag competition you scheduled in your programme, but simply counterbalance it with other less stereotypical activities which hopefully will create just as much atmosphere and grab the attention of others, i. e. the media, seminar staff, passers-by, etc.

If you really want to **leave a positive impression behind**, you could of course take to the streets with a campaign or action, or you could try to reach the media (see below). One thing is sure, you need to carefully consider the image or message you want to give. Remember that your group will be returning home to your own country once the project comes to an end, but that your host partner will have to cope in the long-term with any negative consequences that your action may have provoked!

👉 More in the SALTO booklet about positive imagebuilding for inclusion groups (2009) [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InclusionForALL/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/InclusionForALL/) and about **campaigning** at [www.advocatesforyouth.org](http://www.advocatesforyouth.org), [www.queeryouth.org.uk](http://www.queeryouth.org.uk), Human Rights Campaign [www.hrc.org](http://www.hrc.org) etc.

Change flourishes best in positive soil.

Positive experiences ensure that people change their attitudes more quickly. Stereotypes are often created due to the fact that some heterosexuals may never have come into contact with a lesbian, gay or bisexual. The obvious way to deal with this is to **create positive contact** between these people and LesBiGays, giving them a possibility to talk and learn from each other. That's why many LesBiGay organisations organise sessions in schools. And why not undertake an international youth project with a mixed group, by mixing LesBiGay and straight young people.

## BREAKING HETERONORMATIVITY AND COUNTERING HETEROSEXISM

Heterosexism, the assumption that everybody is heterosexual, may not be a major problem in a LesBiGay group, but you may experience it at some stage during your international exchange. Since you are travelling in a LesBiGay group, and trying your best to **change people's stereotypes**, you might decide to undertake some of the following as a group in order to make people think about their attitudes.

- Consciously and persistently use neutral language (e.g. partner instead of wife/husband) or use both genders (e.g. boyfriend/girlfriend, he/she, etc.)
  - When giving examples of situations, or when sending invitations to guest speakers, make sure that you include examples of different genders, sexualities or family compositions
  - When giving out information leaflets, ensure that each and every person receives the gay, lesbian, straight, bisexual and transgender information
  - Just because someone identifies him or herself as homosexual does not imply that they won't laugh anymore at straight jokes or find the opposite sex attractive
  - Counter derogatory comments or jokes made by the young people, the youth workers or others. Youth workers should make a firm statement about such comments and act as a role model.
  - Create awareness about different norms in society, e.g. through intercultural analogies, and show that these can vary between different people (e.g. LesBiGays) between different places (e.g. in your host country) or can evolve over time (e.g. the changing situation of LesBiGays).
  - ...
- 👉 You can find different intercultural simulation games which can be adapted for countering heteronormativity in the **SALTO Toolbox for Training** and in the Training-Kit on **Intercultural learning** at [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Toolbox/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Toolbox/) or [www.youth-partnership.net](http://www.youth-partnership.net)



It is also wise not to fall into the mindset of **homosexism**, that being the opposite to heterosexism, unless you do it consciously to make a point. It goes without saying that anyone who is still questioning his or her sexuality, or who is bisexual, would not feel very comfortable in a situation of this kind.

## MAKE THE HEADLINES WITH YOUR LESBIGAY PROJECT

You may have an issue to address or a need that requires some attention. If all goes well your project will address this issue. But you could also gain some publicity with the work that you are doing by attracting the media's attention to your project and your organisation. If you are doing a good job, then why shouldn't you let other people know about it!

The process involved in attracting the media's attention begins long before you have something interesting to tell them. First of all, you need to decide on the **message** you want to put across as well as ways to make it **appealing** to the media. You must also draw up a list of **media contacts** that you can use. Try to find out who is responsible for the type of story you want to relay. The person or persons chosen to speak to the media should be trained and comfortable speaking to journalists and in front of the camera. Adhere to the **spokesperson(s)** that you have decided on, as sometimes the media is more interested in vulnerable or controversial people in the group who might not be the best at conveying your message. In any case, ask the **young people in your group if they would consent** to being photographed or filmed, and give them the option to withdraw from the media coverage if they so wish.

There is a wide **variety of media** that you can target, ranging from the printed media (local or national newspapers, magazines, etc.), radio and TV (both local and national), or newsletters and journals of organisations, institutions, etc. In order to get your project mentioned in the media you will first have to consider the kind of message a reporter would be **interested in** and the topics they would publish or broadcast (e.g. your project launch, the project in action, achievements and results, political action, young people). You cannot always control the image that the media will convey regarding your organisation, but the more information you give them, and the **shorter and clearer** your message, the better your chances in getting the story you want printed or broadcast.

### Some hints in dealing with the media

- **Think original:** do something new, different, innovative, creative, e.g. a live chain of LesBiGay youth around the town hall; build on the world record for the longest kiss, etc. In some countries a LesBiGay project will already be news in itself
- **Think action:** your story should have action, life, energy, or movement to illustrate your project e.g. young LesBiGay people parading, dancing, shouting, playing, crying, kissing, etc.
- **Think visual:** provide images that are sufficiently eye-catching to make the front page or the screen e.g. young people on a globe, wearing masks, kissing, wearing fancy or funny dress, cartoons, etc.

- **Think short:** make your story digestible for the media; concentrate on the essentials; cut out all the unnecessary detail; think of headlines, etc.
- **Think practical:** help the journalist to the max by providing ready made articles, press releases, interesting information, quotes, quality pictures, anecdotes, logos, possibilities to hold interviews or take some photos. Give them an information number where they can quickly contact you to ask some further questions, etc.
- **Think openly:** be prepared to go along with a journalists suggestion, even if it isn't exactly what you had in mind; some news is better than no news!
- **Think current:** relate your story to current news events, e.g. the publication of research on LesBiGay suicide, LesBiGays being convicted in a certain country, etc. Try to get your story to the press before it happens.
- **Think people:** people like to read or hear about human interest, personal stories, dramas or incredible achievements, e.g. a politician that started his activism in a LesBiGay organisation, impossible international LesBiGay relationships, etc.
- **Think connection:** find a connection to the newspaper or newsletter you want to publish in. News gives preferences to stories that have a link to their audience, e.g. European LesBiGay project in your local school (local newspaper); practical examples of LesBiGay youth work (social workers' magazine), etc. Adapt your story to different target groups.
- **Think famous:** try to connect a local or national pop star, politician, sportsperson, business person, etc. to your project, organise activities with him or her, have the famous person present at your press conference, etc.
- **And last but not least: Think twice!** Before you approach the press or lobby politicians we suggest to contact international organisations that are lobbying for LGBT-rights first. Together you can align your media and lobbying work and spread a stronger coherent message. It has happened before that good *but unco-ordinated and unprofessional* intentions have damaged year-long equality work of specialised organisations.  
Contact [www.ilga-europe.org](http://www.ilga-europe.org) or [www.iglyo.com](http://www.iglyo.com)

👉 Find out more about working with the media on [www.ILGA-Europe.org](http://www.ILGA-Europe.org) 's 'Working with the Media' page (under Capacity Building)



## MAKING WAVES WITH YOUR PROJECT

So you've had a great international experience? Maybe it shouldn't stop with just the few members of your organisation who went abroad. Your international try out could lead on to more spin-offs than you might expect.

### The next steps

The international project is only the beginning. The young people that participated in the exchange might well have caught **the international bug** and want to do it again, and might even want to take on more responsibility next time. You can channel the energy they absorbed from this enriching experience abroad into more involvement by them in the organisation. They might **become volunteers** and take on different tasks or might even join the board.

- Keep on creating positive experiences for the participants of your youth exchange to keep the energy flowing
- Give recognition to the learning and personal development the young people achieved during the exchange by giving them a certificate, a letter of recommendation, or start up a YouthPass for them (see [www.youthpass.eu](http://www.youthpass.eu))
- Think of organising another exchange or international project and find out who would be interested in taking part the next time around?
- Be clear on what could be pathways through your organisation for young people after an international project
- Offer guidance and training to young people who want to get more active in your organisation
- Support them in their choices and their tasks
- ...



*from SALTO TC Rainbow*

The project may also lead to further co-operation between your organisation and the **partner organisation(s)**. Discuss together what you envisage as feasible. Don't let the contact between your organisations die away after returning back home. Stimulate the **network** between the young people from the different organisations.

### Connecting with others

The international LesBiGay youth project may definitely have been an interesting learning experience, but it should not only be the youth workers and participants who went abroad that celebrate it. Remember all the **people on the sidelines** who supported you along the way: the board of management, those who provided funding and sponsorship, other young people and youth workers in the organisation, the parents, local community, etc. It would also be considerate to think of them during and after the project:

- Send them a postcard from where you are holding the exchange (don't forget their addresses!)
- Create a daily blog for the people back home, put pictures online (ask permission!), or send regular e-mails to the home front
- Bring a little something from the country to thank those who helped prepare the project (parents, peers, etc.)
- Put together a slide show, exhibition or storytelling evening and give them a taste of what the project was about
- Send thank you notes to the supporters of your event, along with a summary of your report
- Organise an international activity in your organisation so that everybody gets to experience the international connection(s)
- ...



from olleke.be

On hearing the stories about the exchange and seeing all the photos of their peers other members of your organisation become **stimulated** to participate in a similar project. So if it was the case that you didn't find enough interested candidates for the exchange the first time around, you might have to select from a bigger list of candidates next time.

### Spread the word...

If you did many interesting things, used a lot of new, exciting methods or reached some conclusions as regards action, it might be beneficial to **document** them. You will probably have to prepare a report for the funding providers anyway, so why not spend a little more time on it and make it into an interesting publication or a youth work manual. You could use this to **show** to the outside world the good work your organisation is doing. At the same time, it will help raise your organisation's profile and give more recognition to the work you are doing. You can share the results of your activity in a variety of ways:

- Make sure you take enough 'material' back from your international exchange that would help you circulate the results: notes, pictures, videos, press clippings, etc.
- Develop a seminar report including the results and achievements of your project – to be sent to the funding providers, or to the parents of those participants who give you their consent
- Put together a booklet or a manual from the methods you used or the good practices you exchanged
- If you came to any conclusions or recommendations regarding LesBiGay issues forward them on to the appropriate politicians (after checking with the relevant LGBT or equality lobby organisation)
- Organise a press conference or a media event (see above) to present your results, your new publication or your political recommendations
- Circulate a newsletter or write an article about your exchange programme
- Document your activity on your website(s)
- Maintain a healthy relationship with your funding providers, by sending them a report or keeping deadlines. You will probably need them again for future projects. Meet with them to present them your results.
- ...

All this can be done to get a little bit more out of an international project in which LesBiGay young people get the chance to come together and discuss issues that they regard important and to take part in activities they enjoy and can learn from. It is always nicer to **combine fun and work!**

### Make your work sustainable...

**Share your experiences** with other LesBiGay organisations! Just like you maybe were looking for good examples when starting up your first international project, other organisations might also benefit from your experiences, from your learning, from your tips and advice.

IGLYO (*International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Youth and Student Organisation*) provides various spaces to exchange information on international projects. By sharing experiences here organisations can learn from each other's projects, and build on each other experiences. At the same time IGLYO gets input for its political work representing the needs of LGBTQ young People on an European level [www.iglyo.com](http://www.iglyo.com) If you are interested to get involved in LGBTQ youth work on an international level after your international project then it is certainly worthwhile to contact IGLYO.

You can undertake different activities or develop different tools to follow-up and to **'disseminate and exploit'** the results of your project. Sending out the results of your project (e.g. a report, the lessons learnt, a CD-ROM, new methods,...) is one thing, getting them USED is even better. You will need to have a look at your project's **potential to have an impact** at an early stage – before you actually start the project!

👉 SALTO developed a practical booklet on how to create the greatest possible impact with your youth project, called **'Making Waves'**. It contains lots of tips and tricks on how to increase the visibility, dissemination and exploitation of your project results.

Download it from

[www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/MakingWaves/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/MakingWaves/)



# REFERENCES, RESOURCES AND FURTHER READING

Read this booklet in conjunction with the SALTO resource page about setting up international LesBiGay youth projects: [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/LesBiGay/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/LesBiGay/)

## FURTHER READING

Some more SALTO “Inclusion for All” publications:

- **Going International - Inclusion for All (2004)** – a booklet with practical inclusion methods and advice for preparing, implementing and following-up on international projects for young people with fewer opportunities
- **Use your Hands to Move Ahead (2004)** – using practical tasks to increase participation by young people with fewer opportunities in short term European Voluntary Service projects
- **Fit for Life (2005)** – using sport as an educational tool for the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities in youth work and international youth projects.
- **No Offence (2007)** – exploring opportunities and setting up youth projects with young ex-offenders and those at risk of offending
- **Village International (2007)** - a practical booklet for youth workers about setting up international projects in rural and geographically isolated areas
- **Youth and the City (2008)** - a guide about setting up meaningful youth projects in disadvantaged (sub)urban areas
- **No Barriers, No Borders (2008)** – a practical booklet on setting up international mixed ability youth projects (including people with and without a disability)
- **Over the Rainbow (2008)** – a practical booklet on setting up international projects with young lesbians, gays, bisexuals and young people questioning their sexual orientation
- **Inclusion & Diversity (2008)** – how to make your youth work and youth projects more inclusive and reach more diverse target groups (co-operation SALTO Inclusion & SALTO Cultural Diversity)
- **Making Waves (2007)** - Creating a greater impact with your youth projects, a booklet about visibility, dissemination and exploitation of your project results
- **Coaching Guide (2006)** – a guide that explores the concept of Coaching, including practical tools, methods, advice and information (by SALTO Participation)

👉 Find them all at [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Inclusion/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Inclusion/)

**Looking for youth work and training methods on Inclusion and other topics?**

Browse through the SALTO Toolbox for Training at [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Toolbox/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Toolbox/)



**YouthPartnership**

**T-Kit Series:** *The training kits are thematic publications written by experienced youth trainers. They are easy-to-use handbooks for use in training and study sessions, published by the Partnership on Youth between the Council of Europe and the European Commission.*

- Social Inclusion
- Project Management
- Organisational Management
- Methodology in Language Learning
- Intercultural Learning
- International Voluntary Service
- Under Construction... Citizenship, Youth and Europe
- Training Essentials
- Funding and Financial Management
- Educational Evaluation in Youth Work
- Euromed Co-operation

👉 Downloadable from [www.youth-partnership.net](http://www.youth-partnership.net) or [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Toolbox/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Toolbox/)

### ONLINE RESOURCES

SALTO created a specific page with resources for lesbian, gay and bisexual projects at [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/LesBiGay/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/LesBiGay/) - this page will be updated regularly

### PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Resources for working with different personal issues that LesBiGay youth faces:

- **Diversity in Europe:** *manual for youth workers providing teenagers with guidance on their way to identity, sexuality and respect*  
[www.diversity-in-europe.org](http://www.diversity-in-europe.org)
- **Gay Teens:** *support and information site for LGBT young people and those who are unsure of their sexuality, links, news, forum*  
[www.gayteens.org](http://www.gayteens.org)
- **Gay Library:** *worldwide info on LGBT literature, rights, film festivals, science, pride parades, disability, organisations, sports, military, school, etc.*  
[www.gaylibrary.com](http://www.gaylibrary.com)

- **Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays:** *FFLAG is an organisation of parents of lesbian daughters and gay sons which seeks to promote the well-being of lesbian, gay and bisexual people, their families and friends.* - [www.fflag.org.uk](http://www.fflag.org.uk)
- **YouthResource.Com:** *Created by and for GLBT youth, this website offers support, community, resources, and peer-to-peer education about sexual health and other issues of concern to GLBT youth.* [www.youthresource.com](http://www.youthresource.com)
- **Safe Schools for LGBT youth:** *Booklet aimed at school staff for reducing homophobia in schools* <http://members.tripod.com/~twood/guide.html>
- **Discovering Diversity - Teacher Zone:** *A teacher pack to work on Diversity and Tolerance* [www.discoveringdiversity.org/teacher\\_zone/](http://www.discoveringdiversity.org/teacher_zone/)

## LGBT ADVOCACY

Some organisations that work on the rights of LGBT people:

- **IGLYO (International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Youth and Student Organisation):** *IGLYO organises conferences, study sessions, coordination of youth organisations (< 30 yr) -* [www.iglyo.com](http://www.iglyo.com)
- **ILGA (International Lesbian & Gay Association):** *ILGA organises campaigns, surveys, publications, conferences, links to national LGBT organisations*  
*IGLYO and ILGA-Europe jointly published a report on the **Social Exclusion of LGBT Young people in Europe** (spring 2006)*  
[www.ilga.org](http://www.ilga.org) - ILGA-Europe [www.ilga-europe.org](http://www.ilga-europe.org)
- **Stop Discrimination:** *European Commission's website for Diversity and against discrimination in 20 languages, info on European directives and actions*  
[www.stop-discrimination.info](http://www.stop-discrimination.info)
- **Amnesty International - LGBT Network:** *human rights and actions against prosecutions from an LGBT perspective*  
[www.ai-lgbt.org](http://www.ai-lgbt.org)
- **LGBT Education:** *an online community focusing on education about lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender issues*  
[www.lgbt-education.info](http://www.lgbt-education.info)
- **International Gay & Lesbian Human Rights Commission:** *Securing the rights of people regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or HIV status - with links to international funders (www.iglhrc.org/site/iglhrc/content.php?type=1&id=90)*  
[www.iglhrc.org](http://www.iglhrc.org)

- 10 Myths about Homosexuality  
[www.sexuality.org/l/incoming/homomyth.html](http://www.sexuality.org/l/incoming/homomyth.html)
- International Day Against Homophobia - 17 May - [www.idahomophobia.org](http://www.idahomophobia.org)

### ABOUT THE RAINBOW AUTHORS



#### **PASCAL HILDEBERT** (Author & Trainer)

<http://trainers.SALTO-YOUTH.net/PascalHildebert/>

Pascal (French, from Guadeloupe) has been involved in LGBT youth organisations at local, national and international levels and organised a wide variety of activities for young people including international conferences, training events, film festivals, youth exchanges, etc. After working for some European NGOs, Pascal now works as a freelance trainer with and for non-governmental organisations, institutions and businesses where he can apply the expertise he has developed in the LGBT movement. The TC Rainbow adventure was a very stimulating experience where Pascal could realise how youth workers have the strength, drive and motivation to change the world.

[pascal.hildebert@gmail.com](mailto:pascal.hildebert@gmail.com)



#### **TONY GEUDENS** (Author & Editor)

<http://trainers.SALTO-YOUTH.net/TonyGeudens/>

Tony is coordinator of the SALTO-YOUTH Inclusion Resource Centre in Flanders, Belgium. His job allows him to organise a variety of training courses with various target groups. One of the most interesting and rewarding training experiences he ever had was the SALTO TC Rainbow in Romania 2005. It was like the world turned upside down: an island of LesBiGay youth workers in a not so gay friendly country. There is still so much work to be done to create an acceptance of diversity and Tony hopes to contribute to this via this Over the Rainbow booklet.

[tony@salto-youth.net](mailto:tony@salto-youth.net) or [Tony@Geudens.com](mailto:Tony@Geudens.com)



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SALTO-YOUTH Inclusion Resource Centre

[www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Inclusion/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Inclusion/)

(Support for Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities  
within the Youth in Action Programme)

SALTO-Jint, Grétrystraat 26, 1000 Brussel, Belgium

Tel +32 (0)2 209 07 20 - Fax +32 (0)2 209 07 49

[inclusion@salto-youth.net](mailto:inclusion@salto-youth.net)

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and on the contributions received from different experts in the field.

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Coordination, Writing & Editing: Tony Geudens, [tony@salto-youth.net](mailto:tony@salto-youth.net) or [Tony@Geudens.com](mailto:Tony@Geudens.com)

Author: Pascal Hildebert, [pascal.hildebert@gmail.com](mailto:pascal.hildebert@gmail.com)

Layout: miXst, [info@mixst.be](mailto:info@mixst.be)

Illustrations: Zomarr, [www.zomarr.be](http://www.zomarr.be)

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A rainbow consists of many different colours, as does the diversity amongst lesbian, gay and bisexual youth. Surely you find sparkles of this rainbow in your youth organisation as well. This booklet is about how to work with LesBiGay youth in a respectful and helpful way.

Furthermore, Over the Rainbow is a booklet about how to set up international youth projects that involve LesBiGay youth. International projects can be very beneficial not only for young people's personal development, but also for creating a more accepting society of this invisible (hiding?) minority that is LesBiGay youth.

Over the Rainbow is a practical booklet with a range of questions and answers that can help you take the jump from national to international youth projects.

It includes information on finding partner organisations, project funding and tips and tricks on how to deal with specific LesBiGay issues that arise on a project abroad.

And if you don't find what you are looking for in this booklet, perhaps one of the links or references surely will get you on the right track.

So, are you ready to take a look Over the Rainbow?

Based on the SALTO "TC Rainbow" youth worker training course (2005).

**This booklet is part of the SALTO "Inclusion for All" series. Download them for free at: [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/inclusion/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/inclusion/)**

