

# OBESSU & IGLYO



## **Report** **Study Session on Social Exclusion & Minorities at** **School**

European Youth Centre Budapest

March 18-25, 2001

International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Youth  
Organisation  
Organizing Bureau of European School Student  
Unions

The **International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered Youth Organisation** was established in 1984 resulting from the need for better communication and co-operation between local, regional and national LGBT (lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender) youth and student organisations. Since that time IGLYO has grown to include 500 members worldwide. The main aims of the organisation are to create equal opportunities for all young people, to end the discrimination of LGBT youth and to support the emancipation of LGBT youth.

Last year the office moved from Amsterdam to Stockholm and a new office was opened in Ljubljana. This move was in response to the widening gap in the daily realities for LGBT youth between western and eastern European countries.

The **Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions** is the European platform of national school student unions. Established in 1975, its main objectives are aimed at improving the position of school students in secondary education, at increasing co-operation and the exchange of information between school students in Europe, at improving the quality of education and promoting the process of democracy and the benefits of intercultural co-operation in order to create a peaceful and stable environment for all people.

OBESSU has a Secretariat based in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. At this moment, OBESSU represents 26 school student organisations from 21 countries and has contacts in another 10 countries in Europe. This co-organised study session was part of the OBESSU Work Programme for the years 2001 and 2002.

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edited by Josiane Meier, Secretary General OBESSU January 2000 – June 2001

*with the support of and contributions from:*

Ellen Ehmke, Secretary General OBESSU as of June 2001,  
Maria Foster, team member IGLYO and  
Maja Potoènik, Board Member OBESSU

**OBESSU**

Westermarkt 2-V  
NL-1016 DK Amsterdam

tel. +31.20.623 47 13

fax. +31.20.625 58 14

obessu@obessu.org

www.obessu.org

**IGLYO**

Kersnikova 4

1000 Ljubljana

Slovenia

tel. +386.1.431 70 10 int.225

iglyo@wxs.nl

www.iglyo.org

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## Introduction

This study session on social exclusion and minorities at school was organised by OBESSU (Organizing Bureau of European School Student Unions) and IGLYO (International Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender Youth Organisation) in co-operation with the Youth Directorate of the Council of Europe. It took place from March 18 to 25, 2001, at the European Youth Centre in Budapest (EYCB).

The preparation and execution of this event was the first time that IGLYO and OBESSU co-operated with each other in such a manner. The reasons why this co-operation was initiated are that both organisations had this topic of common interest and both believe that it is essential to co-operate in order to be able to change things to the better. The two organisations have many similar aims and partly share their target group, meaning that both can benefit from each others' experience and approach in order to develop common actions starting from this study session.

It was very important for both organisations that this would be an equal and open co-operation between two partners that want to reach a common goal together. The focus was put on topics that were of interest to both organisations, however without ignoring organisation-specific issues, methods or 'traditions' – these were discussed and shared, which made the experience very enriching for everyone, also from a training aspect. The team put a lot of value into being a role model for the participants, meaning that it stood behind things together, discussed openly and honestly, being respectful and simply by having fun with its work and being good friends.

This report of the study session on social exclusion and minorities at school is divided into five main parts:

- The introduction, this part
- The programme of the week, which was changed to a certain extent at various moments during the study session in order to adapt it to the ongoing process
- A day-by-day and session-by-session description of what was done, why it was done and which methods were used
- Conclusions on the study session and the co-operation between IGLYO and OBESSU
- The list of participants, team members and the guest speaker

Finally, we hope that this report proves to be interesting and useful and hope that it will also motivate and encourage you to take action in the field of social exclusion – join a project, start one yourself or simply be(come) a role model, we need more of them!

## Programme of the Study Session on Social Exclusion & Minorities at School

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
<b>Arrival of participants</b>	<b>Breakfast</b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opening</li> <li>• Icebreakers</li> <li>• Introduction to the organisations</li> <li>• Expectations for and aims of the Session</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intro to the day</li> <li>• Prejudices, where do they come from which role do they play</li> <li>• How does exclusion work – role play</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intro to the day</li> <li>• Minority – majority relation</li> <li>• Analysis of problems of social exclusion at school</li> </ul>
	<b>Coffee Break</b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to the programme</li> <li>• Explanations CoE, YD and EYC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the role of the different actors in social exclusion – continuation role play</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theatre of the oppressed</li> </ul>
	<b>Lunch</b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Definition of the terms used</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social exclusion in school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Definition of concrete problems and solutions</li> </ul>
	<b>Coffee Break</b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intro to the theme</li> <li>• Definition &amp; exploring of the terms</li> <li>• Home groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social exclusion in school</li> <li>• Home groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who are the different actors and how can the different actors solve these problems</li> <li>• Home groups</li> </ul>
<b>Dinner</b>			
Welcome evening Intro games	Intercultural evening	Info market on the organisations present	Celebration of the Differences

Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<b>Breakfast</b>	<b>Breakfast</b>	<b>Breakfast</b>	<b>Departure of participants</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intro to the day</li> <li>• Open plenary session</li> <li>• Prevention approaches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intro to the day</li> <li>• Development of projects promoting inclusion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ideas for follow-up</li> <li>• Action planning</li> </ul>	
<b>Coffee break</b>	<b>Coffee break</b>	<b>Coffee break</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevention approaches continued</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting inclusion continued</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Idea swapping</li> </ul>	
<b>Lunch</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reimbursements</li> <li>• Free afternoon</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action planning development of common projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Methods of sharing and networking post-session</li> </ul>	
	<b>Coffee break</b>	<b>Coffee break</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free afternoon</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concrete ideas and tools for social inclusion</li> <li>• Home groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Methods of sharing and networking continued</li> <li>• Final evaluation of the Study Session</li> <li>• Closing of the study session</li> </ul>	
	<b>Dinner</b>	<b>Dinner</b>	
Dinner in town	Free evening	Farewell party	

**Sunday, March 18, 2001**

### **Welcome evening with intro games**

The welcome evening was organised in a very informal way, as the study session had not officially begun, and participants were still arriving. The aim of the welcome evening was to begin to break down barriers, and for participants to learn each other's names and get to know each other a little. Several games were played in order to achieve these aims:

The first game was "human bingo" each participant received a list of characteristics and likes/dislikes that he/she had to tick off when they met people who filled them, i.e. 'find someone who likes pink' etc. The aim of this was to get participants interacting.

We then played a name game called "crocodile", in which participants had to repeat each others' names.

After this we did mutual interviews: participants had to work in groups of two filling out an interview form for each other and answering questions such as age, favourite colour etc. These filled-in interview forms were put together with participants' photos and displayed on the wall for the rest of the week.

After this we did the "Greeting" game: Participants had to move around the room greeting people in different styles, e.g. as if they are happy to see that person, angry, scared, shy etc. This game was a very good icebreaker, and people had a lot of fun!

The last game we played was another name game. The participants were put in two teams and a blanket was held up separating the teams. Each team nominated someone to go and sit by the blanket and when the blanket is lowered each team tries to be the first person to remember the name of the person from the other team; the winners gain this person for their side! The aim of this game was simply to encourage people to remember each other's names.

After this very fun but also quite demanding evening, the participants were free to choose what they wanted to do.

**Monday, March 19, 2001**

## **Opening and Icebreakers**

The study session was opened by the prep team and all participants were welcomed on behalf of IGLYO and OBESSU.

The prep team introduced itself to the participants and there was a round of names and a few icebreakers in order to get people moving and to break down barriers, as well as for those who had arrived after the welcome evening the day before.

## **Introduction to the organisations and the co-operation**

As there were two organisations arranging this study session together, it was important to the team to make sure all participants know which two organisations these are, a bit about what they do and how they work and why they were organising this study session together.

The organisations themselves were presented starting from the commonalities between them and then showing how each of the two organisations specifically deals with the commonality mentioned, if applicable.

Please see the below transcript of the overhead sheet used at the study session:

<b>OBESSU-specific</b>	<b>Commonalities</b>	<b>IGLYO-specific</b>
European	<b>International</b>	World-wide
School students	<b>Youth</b>	
School & education organisation	<b>Equal opportunities</b>	Everyone everywhere
<b>Multicultural</b>		
Open to all	<b>Minority issues</b>	GLBT youth & multiple minority youth
<b>NGO</b>		
<b>Non party political</b>		
<b>Members of the European Youth Forum</b>		
Human Rights education	<b>Advocates of Human Rights</b>	
<b>Changing society</b>		
<b>Democratic</b>		

In order to answer the question 'Why this co-operation?', the team explained that the two organisations believe it is essential to co-operate in order for us to be able to change things to the better. Furthermore, both organisations have partly the same aims and target group – therefore both can and want to benefit from each others' experience and develop common actions, starting from this study session.

## **Participants' expectations and aims**

The aim of this session was to get to know each other's expectations and agree upon common aims for the study session.

Participants were asked to write their input to each of the following points on a differently coloured post-it note:

- Something I want to see happening
- Something I don't want to see happening
- Something I want to take home with me
- Something I want to give

These post-its were stuck on a wall and the participants and team looked at and tried to structure them together, in order to get an impression of the various ideas in the room. After an exchange of impressions, the team concluded that the elements mentioned were very similar to what it had thought of and that it hoped it would be possible to make people's expectations come true during the week.

What follows is a summary of the points that were put down by participants:

Something I want to see happening:

- People working on common concrete projects
- Exchange of ideas
- Interesting discussions
- Co-operation

Something I don't want to see happening:

- Discrimination and exclusion
- Only focus on GLBT
- Arguments
- Lack of acceptance
- Staying in set groups
- Waste of time
- Tension
- Stereotype discussions

Something I want to take home with me:

- Networking knowledge
- New contacts and ideas
- People I know I can rely on
- New view on intercultural learning
- Ideas on how to best integrate minorities

Something I want to give:

- My experience, ideas, knowledge, information
- Smiles, a place in my heart
- Thoughts for a radical change of school systems

## **Introduction to the team's approach**

The team introduced its basic approach in order for the participants to have a good idea of what they can and cannot expect from the team during the week. What follows is a transcript of the overhead sheet used for this presentation:

- We are here to learn with and from each other (we are not and cannot be your teachers)
- Ask questions whenever things are not clear
- We are open for your suggestions and proposals
- We try to use a variety of methods
- We aren't perfect
- We want to get lots of things done / reach a lot and have fun while we are doing so
- We want to provide space and time for each individual
- We want to make you happy!

## **Introduction to the programme**

The programme for the week was presented by the team, with the aim to highlight the 'red thread' and make sure everyone understands the objectives of each part. Furthermore, changes to the draft programme were announced, participants reminded about their preparation for certain parts of the programme (such as the information market), any elements that were not clear before were explained and participants' suggestions taken up.

After the introduction of the programme itself, several (voluntary) groups and continuous activities were presented. The division of home groups in which the participants would meet with a team member almost every evening was presented, as was the possibility to participate in the social committee (responsible for organising / helping to organise social events during the week) and the follow-up committee (responsible for thinking of useful means of following the study session up). Finally, a 'vampire game' was introduced that would be played throughout the week as a fun way of continually interacting and getting to know each other.

## **Introduction on the Council of Europe, the Youth Directorate and the European Youth Centre**

In order to familiarise the participants with the institutional reality they have met in coming to the EYC for the study session and to introduce the participants to the main aims, objectives, fields of work and concepts of importance in the Council of Europe, educational advisor Yael Ohana gave an introduction on this topic. What follows below is a summary of her presentation.

The Council of Europe was founded in 1949 after the cruelties of World War II in order to prevent any further wars in Europe. It is based on the European convention of Human Rights and sees Europe not only geographically, but also through democracy and a cultural identity.

The Council of Europe currently has 43 member countries and works on and for co-operation on relevant issues for societies, the universality of Human Rights, democratic ideals and standards and a European cultural identity. the prevention of war in Europe.

The following bodies form the Council of Europe:

- The Parliamentary Assembly – delegates from the national parliaments of the 43 member states
- The Committee of Ministers – the 43 foreign ministers of the member states
- The Secretariat General – the executive body of which mainly its staff are members
- The European Court of Human Rights – 43 judges
- The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities in Europe

The Council of Europe is an inter-governmental organisation, meaning that the member states are – with a lot of the decisions that are made – left the freedom to realise them or not.

The European Court of Human Rights is special because it can accuse countries and give sanctions for not following the Convention on Human Rights. It is the only institution in the world like this and an institution of last instance.

The European Youth Centres are part of Directorate for Youth and Sports in the Directorate-General IV, which is the part of the Secretariat General responsible for education and culture. Aside from the European Youth Centres in Strasbourg and Budapest, the Directorate for Youth and Sports is also responsible for the European Youth Foundation, the Youth Mobility Fund and the ADACS programme (for new, young democracies), and for intergovernmental co-operation in the field.

The Directorate for Youth and Sports and the EYC's work on a variety of issues, such as education, training, research, youth policy definition, information, funding youth projects etc. Within the field of intercultural learning and youth participation, current priority fields are South Eastern Europe, Human Rights education, participation and non-formal education.

Finally, the participants were provided with the internet addresses of the EYC's, the Council of Europe and the website for Human Rights education, as well as with technical details about the EYCB and reimbursements.

## **Communication and creating the group**

Groups do not just happen – they can be built up and one can improve their climate. This was especially important to the team, as there were many participants from very different backgrounds, with different experiences and coming from different organisations. Several different exercises were done and subsequently discussed, with the overall aim to create awareness for the way we communicate with each other and the role of the individual in creating a good group:

**Still picture:** The whole group created a still picture of a forest – one person started by putting him-/herself into the shape of an element of a forest (tree, bush, mushroom, animal...), and the rest of the group joined him/her one by one, each of them choosing something else to be. Finally, the whole group was one forest made up of many different elements that belong together.

**Pushing air:** This exercise aimed at getting any kind of discrimination out of the group. The group stood in a circle and a variety of pushing movements were done while imagining that one was pushing discrimination away. This was to become an exercise done at several other occasions during the week in order to regenerate and refresh the mind.

**Communication:** People went into groups of two and had to sit back to back. One of the two received a drawing of an imaginary shape, which he/she had to describe to the other who had to draw it onto a blank sheet of paper. The results of the exercise were shown in the group and the communication that had taken place was discussed. Conclusions were that one has to be aware of what one says and the words one uses, one should be precise and ask whether things are clear and not to simply assume that one was understood correctly or that one understood the other one correctly.

**Body language:** As words are only a small part of the communication that takes place between people, an exercise on body language was done in order to emphasise its importance. The group was split in two – group A and group B. Group A was told that they are arriving at the airport after a long trip and that they are being picked up there by a good friend they haven't seen in a long time. Group B was told that they were picking up a friend at the airport, but that they are only allowed to say one (positive) thing and then must behave contrary to what they said. The result of this exercise was the group's conclusion that if one acts negatively it is strange and it does not matter if he/she says something positive, as the communication partner would not take it as something positive anyway (e.g. interpret it as sarcasm or similar).

**Behaviour in the group:** Each participant had to describe their behaviour in the group by imitating an animal. After the others had guessed this, he/she explained why he/she had chosen this animal.

## Definitions of the terms used and exploring the theme

An exercise on definitions of the terms used was then done in order to allow the participants to exchange on the meaning of the concepts and terms that will be used in the session, to raise the awareness of participants that the issue we are dealing with is very complex, to develop the understanding of participants for the different perspectives of different people / minorities / age groups / sexes / etc. on the issues of the seminar, to underline the intercultural dimension of the discussion on the issues and to actively engage the participants in the construction of the thematic content of the seminar and to develop their ownership of the concepts.

This so-called DNA exercise had three steps and participants received the following instructions:

- Step 1: every individual participant draws up their individual DNA on the form provided, on one of the following terms: social exclusion, human rights, minority or school
- Step 2: groups of five participants share their DNA on the same topic with each other, discuss the topic and the DNA's and develop a sketch based on their topic and DNA's that they will present in plenary
- Step 3: the smaller groups present their sketches in plenary, after which a discussion will take place

*Example: the DNA of exclusion:*

The participant receives a sheet of paper with a sort of graph on it. At the top of the sheet is a box with the word 'exclusion' in it. From this box, two branches lead to an empty box each – the participant should write the first two words that come to mind when he/she thinks of 'exclusion' into these boxes. From each of these two boxes, two lines lead to an empty box each that the participant must fill again and so on, until there are eight boxes to be filled. Then, the whole thing goes backwards (two boxes being connected to one etc.), until there is again one box at the bottom of the page. Thus, the participant starts from 'exclusion' and his/her associations with this word, and ends with a word that sums up the results of the associations again, thereby developing his/her understanding of the word 'exclusion'.

After steps 1 and 2 had been completed, the following sketches/presentations were presented in plenary:

- Group on social exclusion: 'frozen pictures' with a poor and a rich person
- Group on human rights: made their own declaration of Human Rights based on the contents of their DNA's
- Group on school: sketch depicting exclusion of a small group at school
- Group on school: sketch resulting in the question: 'is the role of school only to be a learning factory or also to promote open-mindedness?'

- Group on minority: sketch depicting the influence NGO's can have on exclusion
- Group on Human Rights: made a perfect DNA of Human Rights
- Group on minority: sketch focussing on majority-minority relation, in which the problem was solved after minority helped majority
- Group on social exclusion: presentation saying that people have 'boxes in their heads' that can lead to tensions and thus to wars – one must fight this process right from the beginning

As time had become short, the discussion on the exercise and it's outcome was postponed to Tuesday morning.

## **Home groups**

The home groups that had been divided in the morning and consisted of 4-5 participants plus one member of the team met in the evening in order to share opinions on the day, make suggestions, ask questions and discuss any issues they felt were relevant. The home groups met almost every evening.

## **Intercultural evening**

In order for participants to have the opportunity to get to know each others' cultures, traditions, customs, drinks, food, games and songs, an intercultural evening was organised. A main event was the guessing of where food and drinks come from in a small competition, after which songs and games from the various countries and cultures were presented.

## Tuesday, March 20, 2001

After an introduction to the day and technical announcements, the second day of the study session began with a discussion on the definition of terms and the DNA exercise that had taken place the day before.

### Discussion on the definition of terms / DNA exercise

Many different images were portrayed in the sketches and presentations on Monday – to get an idea of the impressions and in order to draw preliminary conclusions, we had short buzz-groups (groups of 3-4 participants, 10-15 minutes time to discuss), followed by an open plenary discussion.

#### *Impressions from buzz-groups on the sketches:*

- some groups stayed positive, while others began negatively and became positive towards the end of the sketch
- empowerment was an important element in the sketches
- being from a minority should not entail exclusion, and only tolerance towards people from minority groups is not enough
- all sketches had different topics, however, they were all under the topic of exclusion, all were under the 'umbrella' of human rights (especially when it came to solving the problems), and all of them were very interrelated
- a 'red thread' could be seen through all sketches – this red thread was exclusion
- the sketches discussed social exclusion from the point of view of minority-majority relations – but it is necessary to discuss social exclusion at different levels (not only concerning minorities, but also individuals)
- the importance of tolerance, of just letting people be (it is not absolutely necessary to communicate / interact if those concerned don't want to)
- all was very mixed – if the topics would not have been known, it would not have been easy to figure out what is what

#### *Plenary discussion:*

- 'tolerance' is not such a great word – the term 'acceptance' is better for describing the way different people should deal with each other
- 'tolerance' is a stage in a development
- it must be something natural to tolerate / accept others as they are
- there is a difference between 'tolerance' and 'acceptance': acceptance should be strived at
- 'tolerance' implies that there is something to be tolerated, but this should not be necessary – one should appreciate all the positive differences
- tolerance isn't the final stage: there should simply not be any rules for private life
- tolerance is much higher and harder to reach than acceptance, as it also implies being interested in the other
- tolerance can be acceptance of difference – this is simply a matter of preferred terms
- one should use respect rather than tolerance and strive towards respect, love and understanding

- a world of harmony would not be so great as it would be very boring –what is important is HOW conflicts are solved and it is important to see others' point of view
- every individual has their own idea and definition of tolerance – it is necessary to see it as a stage in a development
- it is necessary to 'put diversity on the table'

## **Work groups on social exclusion at school**

In order to start practically dealing with the topic of the study session and to gain an understanding of the current situation concerning exclusion at schools in Europe, four parallel work groups were held on the topic of social exclusion at school.

The work group description was as follows:

The aim of this working group is to look into what different types of social exclusion there are in school, how these are structured, and what methods are used to exclude individuals, groups and minorities at school. Please discuss the following questions:

- What different types of social exclusion are there in school?
- What groups and types of individuals are excluded?
- What methods are used in the process of exclusion?
- Who is carrying out the exclusion?
- What are the characteristics of the different types of exclusion?

At the end of the session, please sum up the discussion and the outcome of the working group on a flip chart for a brief presentation in plenary.

What follows are the reports of the four work groups:

### **Group 1**

Exclusion can be intentional or unintentional, and active or passive. Both groups and individuals can be excluded, either because of an individual's personality or because an individual or a group are part of a minority due to differences in religion, race/ethnicity, sex, sexuality, social class, language, age, ability.

The two methods of exclusion are active and passive exclusion. Passive exclusion describes the situation when there is ignorance, i.e. a lack of knowledge, and when one does not undertake action against exclusion even though one would actually have the power to do so.

In order for there to be passive exclusion, there must be active exclusion, which is characterised by intentional ignorance, verbal and physical violence. Some reasons for this can be 'excluding in order not to be excluded', or self-protection. An example of this is when minorities exclude themselves.

Those who exclude can be the head teacher and the administrative staff, teachers, as well as the majority of school students – either because there is a leader and followers or because of the social system in or outside of school.

Minorities can exclude themselves and, when they are in other situations or, when they become members of the majority, they can exclude other minorities.

## Group 2

One can find the following types of social exclusion at school: social exclusion of groups, of individuals, formal/institutional social exclusion and informal social exclusion.

Within groups, there are visible and invisible minorities, and these are sometimes also combined. Points of difference can be ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation and ability/disability.

The methods used in the process of exclusion can be:

- a lack of information,
- when educators do not involve minority school students in the education management process,
- when members of a minority choose not to get involved, and
- legal/formal exclusion, caused by rules and regulations.

The following (groups of) people can be those who exclude:

- teachers/educators
- school students
- the majority or minority groups themselves
- the minority if it doesn't integrate or doesn't accept the majority in its midst
- members of the administration / officials
- individuals

Characteristics of different types of exclusion can be:

- labelling or marking
- stereotypes that are applied to certain groups
- an individual's choice to group with others

During its discussion, the group came up with some further related questions:

- is ignoring people exclusion?
- are elites a self-appointed minority? and
- are women an oppressed majority?

## Group 3

*Who excludes?* Anybody and everybody can and does exclude. Furthermore, authorities, influential people as well as popular or leading classmates can be very influential in the process of exclusion.

*Who is excluded?* People with differences in gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, age, health, social status, sexual orientation, intelligence, ability and physical appearance. However, not all people who are members of a minority group are always excluded – whether people are excluded or not depends very much on the situation.

Why is there social exclusion at school?

- To keep benefits/advantages for oneself
- Not to lose power or in order to gain more power
- Because of a desire to manipulate

How are people socially excluded at school?

- Verbal or physical abuse, such as bullying
- Institutional exclusion
- Marginalisation of the problem (e.g. "there is no social exclusion of ... at our school.")
- Filtration of information
- Isolation

Characteristics of types of social exclusion at school: this has a lot to do with people's behaviour. Neglect can be very harmful as it can lead to social exclusion and cause a lot of damage. Furthermore, a lack of respect as well as ignorance are such characteristics that can cause social exclusion.

This group's main conclusions were that exclusion can be everywhere and everyone can be the perpetrator (i.e. the one who excludes), and that by becoming a member of an elite, people can adopt its habits, even if they were a member of the minority before. A question the group came up with: is social exclusion acquired or natural behaviour?

#### **Group 4**

This group began by presenting different ways in which members of the group have been socially excluded at school. These are for religious reasons, because of their appearance, due to ability/disability and for material reasons (money, fashion, etc.)

Types and methods of social exclusion: ignoring, which is a passive way of excluding, and bullying (verbal and physical), which is an active way of excluding. What also often happens at schools is that school students are excluded from social activities of other school students.

People can be excluded for reasons of different appearance, shyness, not being part of a 'big gang', for no obvious reason (just because they are themselves), differences in culture, in fashion, ethnicity, weaknesses and background.

Everyone excludes others in one way or the other, however, some do this without realising that it is happening. Sometimes exclusion also takes place because those that are weak want to become stronger, and thus exclude others in order to reach this aim.

This work group concluded that those who exclude want to be stronger as they are usually weak themselves, and that mainly any people with any differences to others can be excluded if the situation for this is given.

### **Work groups on aspects of social exclusion at school**

In order to get deeper into the topic of social exclusion at school, four different aspects of social exclusion at school were looked at more closely by four different work groups (one aspect per work group).

#### **Group 1 – The effects of social exclusion on school education**

*What follows is the description for work group 1:*

The aim of this working group is to look into how the different types of social exclusion, which were discussed in the previous working group, affect the learning and teaching that takes place at school. Please discuss the following questions:

1. How does the exclusion of individuals affect the learning of the very individual and the rest of the school students / class?
2. How does the exclusion of groups / different types of minorities affect the learning of these groups and their fellow students?
3. Does the exclusion of individuals and groups affect what is taught at school? (subjects, values, skills...)

At the end of the session, please sum up the discussion and the outcome of the working group on a flip chart for a brief presentation in plenary.

*Work group 1 provided the following report:*

1. The effect of exclusion of individuals on the learning process:

- Being excluded can either increase the competitiveness of the person who is excluded (trying to achieve acceptance through performance) or it can result in their giving up on their learning
- The psychological effect is stress, which directly disturbs or hinders the learning process and indirectly can lead to other problems, trying to find other means of fulfilment, such as with drugs and alcohol etc.
- Schools can raise their academic standards / performance by eliminating slower school students, thus they can reach a higher status by excluding
- The majority misses out on the variety that would be experienced if all school students would / could participate fully

2. The effect of exclusion of groups on the learning process:

- Perpetuates the idea of exclusion as a social norm
- This creates a bad learning environment
- The excluded group may have chosen to isolate itself from the majority and can be self-sufficient – also in the learning process – resulting in mutual exclusion

3. The effect of exclusion on the subject matter:

- Social exclusion at schools can affect the curriculum. Such effects can especially be seen in subjects like geography, history and literature.
- Social exclusion also affects the class participation and learning of and from the group in general, as there are elements missing.

## **Group 2 – The effects of social exclusion on the social climate and the individual school students**

*What follows is the description for work group 2:*

The aim of this working group is to look into how the different types of social exclusion, which were discussed in the previous working group, affect the learning and teaching that takes place at school. Please discuss the following questions:

1. How does the exclusion of individuals affect the individual and the rest of the school students / class?
2. How does the exclusion of groups / different types of minorities affect these groups and their fellow students?
3. How does the exclusion of individuals and groups affect the values that are transmitted in school?
4. How does exclusion in school affect the social climate in school?

At the end of the session, please sum up the discussion and the outcome of the working group on a flip chart for a brief presentation in plenary.

*Work group 2 provided the following report:*

1. Effects of the exclusion of individuals

- Reverse aggression
- Less success in studies
- Segregation
- Dangerous / risk behaviour
- Depression
- The feeling one is never good enough
- Hiding one's minority identity
- Disbelief in justice and a rightful world
- Hatred towards one's minority identity
- Prejudices about the majority and fear of them / defensiveness

2. Effects of the exclusion of groups

- Isolation
- A feeling of superiority
- Wish to show the power / aggression
- Individualism (selfishness)
- Group learns that abuse, such that exclusion / ignorance can be a norm / can be accepted

3. Effect on the values transmitted at school

- Making democratic principles seem to apply only in theory
- Scepticism
- Promoting stereotypes and trying to make / teach the students to all be / look the same

4. Effect on the social climate in school

- Tense atmosphere
- Physical / verbal abuse / aggression
- No space for individual rights
- Fear / phobias

**Group 3 – Involuntary inclusion in school and the processes of assimilation and inclusion**

*What follows is the description for work group 3:*

The aim of this working group is to look into how the processes of assimilation and (involuntary) inclusion of individuals and groups of different origin, religion, sexual orientation, cultural background etc. are put into place at school. Please discuss the following questions:

1. How do schools tackle the issue of having school students from different backgrounds?
2. Do schools strive to equalise the differences between the school students (adjust certain groups to others), or does it respect the school students the way they are? How is this done and with what result?
3. Are there any processes of assimilation / involuntary inclusion taking place at school? What effects do these processes have on individuals and groups at school?

At the end of the session, please sum up the discussion and the outcome of the working group on a flip chart for a brief presentation in plenary.

*Work group 3 provided the following report:*

1. How do schools tackle the issue of having school students from different backgrounds?
  - School separate school students from different backgrounds, which results in there being very few or no connections between school students from different groups (gender, religion, material wealth etc.), even though there should actually be a school for all.
2. Do schools strive to equalise differences among school students?
  - Schools do try to equalise differences among school students by putting them into separate groups. However, existing problems are only made worse through such separation, with the result that differences can turn into conflicts.
3. Assimilation / involuntary exclusion at school
  - Assimilation and involuntary inclusion do take place at school and the school students concerned do not agree with this (e.g. when school students from a certain cultural background are forced to learn in another language, this is assimilation).
  - It is necessary that schools provide space for learning about one's own culture and identity and how to express oneself in one's own language.
  - Nevertheless, exchange and interaction among school students is very important and should take place.

Question from plenary: What is your opinion of separation as a means of protecting?

Answer from the work group: Protection is fine, but not in the sense of isolation. It is necessary to create awareness that protection is necessary and that school students must learn together, with and from each other.

#### **Group 4 – The role of the education system in the process of social exclusion**

*What follows is the description for work group 3:*

The aim of this working group is to look into how the school systems tackle the issue of social exclusion in school, and to analyse how the structure of the education system affects social exclusion at school. Please discuss the following questions:

1. Is the structure of education (lessons, curricula...) affecting the exclusion of certain individuals and groups? How and in what way?
2. Is the structure of the school system affecting the exclusion of certain individuals and groups? How and in what way?
3. Is the teaching material used in education and/or the subjects taught in school excluding certain individuals or groups from taking part in the education? How and in what way?
4. Are the general values taught in school affecting the social exclusion of individuals and groups?

At the end of the session, please sum up the discussion and the outcome of the working group on a flip chart for a brief presentation in plenary.

*Work group 4 provided the following report:*

#### 1. Structure of the lessons

Lessons and curricula affect the process of exclusion depending on the content and on the materials and examples that are used, where the emphasis is put, what is mentioned and what is not.

- Schools should show and educate diversity starting from primary school
- It is necessary for schools to give information and to allow people to form their own opinion

## 2. Structure of the school system

All school systems contribute to social exclusion, especially when they divide school students into different 'levels' of education. The level at which a system contributes to social exclusion also depends very much on which values are emphasised through the system.

## 3. Teaching materials

- Exclusion takes place because of language difficulties, e.g. when all materials are in a language that is incomprehensible to some of the school students / in which some school students have an advantage
- Exclusion also takes place due to learning difficulties and differences, as usually not every school student gets the attention he/she needs

## 4. Values

School reflects society and makes people aware of their place in this society – thus it can secure the social system that is in place. Furthermore, the teacher has a lot of power in the learning process (political, social, personal influence).

Comment: If one divides students in school, one limits their chances in society.

## Role play scenario

In order to gain a real understanding for how exclusion and prejudices can work, for what types of reasons people exclude other people, how the process of exclusion can develop as well as for different actors and their roles in the process of exclusion, a role play was organised. By using this method, participants could experience, observe and analyse how such situations can develop and what their result can be.

*What follows is the scenario that was handed out to all participants:*

### **Scenario:**

A local high school has recently begun the recruitment procedure to hire a new history teacher. History is a subject, which few of the final year students take seriously and the school is known for generally poor performance. Young people attending this school have many problems, including trouble with the police and drug related issues. The young people attending the school are mostly white even though the local area has many immigrant and ethnic minority families. The different ethnic communities represented at the school tend to remain isolated and there are often violent outbreaks during classes.

An advertisement has been published in the local and national press and a large number of promising applications were received. The head teacher and senior management colleagues have made a short list of the three most preferred candidates for the job. The selection criteria to be short-listed were documented qualification and previous experience. All three candidates on the short list have equally impressive CV's. All the candidates have been interviewed and demonstrate a high level of qualification and commitment. The headmistress has a dilemma.

The head-teacher has decided to convene a meeting of teachers, student representatives, members of the parents association as well as the representatives of local religious groups to discuss the recruitment of the history teacher and to receive advice concerning who should be hired. The history and chemistry teachers, the school counsellor, one member of the parents' association, the student representative, the local catholic priest and a representative of the local authority who provides funding to the school have confirmed their attendance.

Profile of the short-listed candidates:

**Candidate 1**

Male, 28 years of age, a recent graduate of teacher training college, with excellent recommendations from his professors, and good grades. He has some professional experience, in particular with problem children and those who have been in trouble with the police. His previous employer, a local high school in a similar urban area to the one where this school is located, has praised him highly as being responsible and efficient, as well as compassionate and committed. This young man, however, is known to have had drug related problems in the past and to have been committed to a young offenders institution at the age of 16.

**Candidate 2**

Female, 45 years of age, a professional of many years in the teaching field. Known for her disciplinarian tendencies and for achieving high results with even the most difficult students. She has excellent qualifications and a few new ideas about how to work on raising the profile of history in the school. She is a member of the local black community and is well known for her anti-racist convictions and political involvement.

**Candidate 3**

Male, 33 years of age, an experienced teacher, well known in the local community for having developed new methods of teaching history to disinterested young people in another local school, where he has had a lot of success with parents and pupils alike. He has the right profile and experience for this job. However, it is well known in the local community that he was fired from his job at the other school. He is openly homosexual and it is believed that he is HIV+.

*Each of the following role descriptions was given to the participant who had chosen to play the role in question:*

**The Head Teacher**

*Scenario:*

*As the head teacher of the school, you have invited all the people present to this meeting to give you their opinions and advice concerning who to hire. You want to involve the community in the decision in order to avoid conflict.*

You are a progressively minded head teacher of many years experience. You are concerned that your school is slowly but surely becoming a school for losers. Your present history teaching staff is rather poor and has not lived up to your expectations. Each of these candidates would be an improvement. But, you are aware that there might be objections to each of them because of their background and because of the tensions that exist both in the school and in the community. Your main concern is to get one of them recruited without causing too much anger among other teaching staff and the parents of the school children. You think you should chair the meeting, as you have invited the others to give you advice, but are concerned that tensions may be running high, so you suggest that the people present elect a chair for the meeting. You can even offer to chair the meeting, and ask for the others' approval. You also suggest that you present the profiles of the three short-listed candidates so that everyone has all the same information.

### ***The Chemistry Teacher***

#### *Scenario:*

*You have been invited by the head teacher of your school to participate in this meeting and to give your opinion and advice about who should be hired to act as a new history teacher.*

You don't know why you have been invited to this meeting, you're in the process of trying to find a job in another school because you cannot accept criminal activities being present in school and this school is full of children who have been in trouble with the police. You think that it is a crying shame to invite anyone with a criminal record to teach in a school. You consider it disrespectful to the profession you love. As it happens, you also find candidate 2 rather attractive and would be quite happy to have such an interesting female colleague on the staff. You support her candidacy openly but you are embarrassed to be open about your real reasons for supporting her. You try to find more 'professional' reasons and arguments why she would be hired.

### ***The History Teacher***

#### *Scenario:*

*You have been invited by the head teacher of your school to participate in this meeting and to give your opinion and advice about who should be hired to act as a new history teacher.*

You feel particularly concerned and threatened by this recruitment procedure. You are aware that the head teacher considers your teaching ability to be poor and you are worried that you will eventually lose your job if the new history teacher is too successful. You therefore favour the youngest candidate (candidate 1), as you will have seniority, and therefore some power, over him. As it happens, you are particularly afraid of the female candidate (candidate 2) as she is known for her strict discipline, and for producing high grades, something at which you have failed miserably. You find it particularly outrageous that she has been short-listed as you believe the woman's place is in the home. You express this openly at the meeting.

### ***The Student Representative***

#### *Scenario:*

*You have been invited by the head teacher of your school to participate in this meeting and to give your opinion and advice about who should be hired to act as a new history teacher.*

You are present in your function as a student representative, although your election took place under dubious circumstances, with few of the students actually voting. The school authorities don't take the student representatives too seriously, and, in fact, neither do the students. You were recently elected, and you see this meeting as an opportunity to develop your political agenda and reputation. You are the only member of an ethnic minority community invited to this meeting. As it happens, you are highly politically involved, in particular on anti-racism issues. In fact you are considered something of a radical. You favour candidate 2 because you have met her and respect her political leanings. On the other hand, you have a serious problem with homosexuals (and therefore are against hiring candidate 3) even though you know this is not particularly politically correct. You are not able to hide your homophobic attitudes very well, although you know that other people don't appreciate it when you speak openly about your views on homosexuality.

### **Representative of the Parents' Association**

#### *Scenario:*

*You have been invited by the head teacher of the school your children attend to participate in this meeting and to give your opinion and advice about who should be hired to act as a new history teacher.*

You are an average local working parent. You have been asked to go to this meeting on short notice, and do not consider yourself particularly well prepared or placed to contribute to the discussion. You have 2 children in the school, both in the final classes. One of your children has serious behavioural problems that do not seem to be being addressed adequately in this school. But, you cannot afford to send him to a special school. For this reason you favour the hiring of candidate 1, as he seems to be experienced with these kinds of problems. On the other hand, you are both shocked and appalled that the head teacher could even consider to recruit a man known to be openly gay and HIV+. You have no major objection to the black candidate although you are sometimes nervous when you see bands of black youths roaming your neighbourhood. You don't allow your daughter to date black boys.

### **Representative of the Local Catholic Church**

#### *Scenario:*

*You have been invited by the head teacher of the local community school to participate in this meeting and to give your opinions and advice about who should be hired to act as a new history teacher.*

The community you serve is particularly conservative. You on the other hand are a progressive young priest, recently ordained, and have a vocation for community work. You are concerned about the quality of the education provided in the school as you realise many of the community's problems are linked to low qualification and early dropping out. You favour any candidate that can contribute to raising the quality of the education provided, in particular, candidate 3 as he seems to have had a successful experience in this field previously. However, the fact that he is gay troubles you somewhat. Having said this, you don't like it that sexual orientation is used by others at the meeting as an argument against hiring candidate 3, and you don't like it that the possibility that the candidate is HIV+ is concerned to the a reason not to allow someone to practice their profession. You openly counter homophobic comments in the meeting.

### **School Counsellor**

#### *Scenario:*

*You have been invited by the head teacher of your school to participate in this meeting and to give your opinion and advice about who should be hired to act as a new history teacher.*

You are at your nerves' end and will not be able to survive the next 6 months if the situation in the school does not improve. You sometimes feel that you are in need of counselling just as much as the children you deal with daily in school. You are in favour of any candidate who can ensure discipline and a remedy to some of the more serious problems that are necessarily the result of the social problems of the urban area where the school is located. You are equally in favour of

candidates 2 and 3, although you are not convinced that any new teacher will be able to help you solve the ongoing wave of bullying cases, and violent class room outbursts and their negative emotional effects. You don't like it that some of the other participants of the meeting make what you consider to be racist comments, but you do agree that someone who has a criminal record is not a good role models for school children.

### ***Representative of the Local Authority (school funding body)***

#### *Scenario:*

*You have been invited by the head teacher of one of the local schools to participate in this meeting and give your opinion and advice about who should be hired to act as a new history teacher.*

You are not really interested in participating in this meeting. You feel that you have more important things to attend to, and have had to cancel your tennis match with your boss in order to be present. You were hoping to discuss a pay-raise at the after-tennis drinks. You want to make sure that the school hires the least controversial candidate so that no one can criticise your involvement afterwards. You, therefore, favour candidate 2, because you are convinced that she is the least problematic candidate. It is also a politically correct decision, on which will act in your favour, because you have been reprimanded for your negative opinions on black people in the past and you don't want the other people at the meeting to think of you as racist or for reports of your racist remarks to get back to your boss.

*What follows here are the instructions for playing the role play in general:*

#### **Playing the game:**

This exercise is a role-play. There will be 2 rounds of role playing. The second round will be facilitated by the introduction of the clues to finding a solution.

#### **Concerning the players:**

1. Each player is given 20 minutes to get into their role and prepare their opinion and arguments for the meeting. The players should be given support and props by the facilitators of the exercise.
2. This is a role-play. It is not the same thing as acting. The players must not interpret their role, but must remain themselves while representing a pre-determined role and the attitudes that go with it. The player is free to explore the role, but should try to avoid dramatising or acting it.
3. The players do not know the character of the other players in advance, and will have to act in character during the role-play.

#### **Observers:**

There are 2 kinds of observers in this game:

1. **Special observers:** You need twice the number of special observers as players. The special observers are assigned one player / character to observe by the facilitator. The special observers must observe this character for the duration of the role-play and write down all the arguments they use in the discussion and must observe how they behave in relation to the others taking part in the role-play. During the time that the role players have to prepare their roles, the special observers assigned to the same character should meet and decide who shall observe what. *Think about: what kind of arguments dose the character use to indicate his/her approval or disapproval for each of the candidates? Are they emotional, factual, moral or other kinds of arguments?*

2. **Ordinary observers:** The remainder of the group act as 'ordinary observers'. The role of these observers is to note down their observations concerning how the discussion goes on and the meeting proceeds. Some points to note in particular are as follows:
- Do the players respect each others' turn to speak or do some but in or does everyone try to speak at the same time or do one or two people try to impose their point of view on the others?
  - Does anyone try to take a lead and to facilitate the meeting?
  - What kinds of arguments did players use?
  - Which kinds of arguments were most effective?
  - Was there any change in the attitude and/or behaviour of the players after they received the clues for finding a solution?

**Clues for finding a solution** (for use in the second round of the role play)

**Card 1 – Clues for finding a solution**

This card should be given to the person who is chairing the meeting. If so far in the role play no one has been democratically elected to chair, then this card is for the head teacher.

Chair: You have already been democratically elected to chair the meeting. Continue to do so and follow the tips below.

Head Teacher: You have suggested that it should be democratically decided who the chair should be. You have also proposed that you be chair because you have taken the initiative to invite all the others to the meeting. If the others agreed to your election as chair then keep this card and follow the tips for the chair below. If someone else was elected to chair the meeting, then pass this card to them and take their card in exchange.

**Tips for the chair of the meeting**

It is your job to keep order and facilitate the meeting. You should try to make sure that:

- Everybody has a chance to speak
- People respect each others' turn to speak
- If necessary, set a limit of time for each contribution and do not let the players go beyond the time limit
- Do not allow abusive language and make sure people keep to the issue and do not deviate to irrelevant issues
- Try to move the discussion forward and keep it positive
- Keep people on track – the aim is to find an answer to the question of who to hire

**Card 2 – Clues for finding a solution**

To be given to every player except the chair.

Think about what you can do within your role to find a solution:

- Listen actively and respect the right of everyone to have their say
- Try to relate what you have said to what has been said previously
- When it is your turn to speak, start with a summary of what the person who spoke before has said
- Try to distinguish between the facts and your opinions
- Try not to divert the discussion but keep to the point and focus on trying to choose a candidate who is right for the job. Do not bring in other opinions or ideas you may have.

*Herefollowing is a description of the debriefing and evaluation process that took place after the role play:*

## **Debriefing and evaluation**

### *Part 1*

The initial debriefing of the role play takes place in small groups made up of at least one player, special observers and ordinary observers.

The working groups should discuss 'what happened in this role play?', and each of the different actors should make their comments concerning their perspective on what happened in this role play. This should not take more than half an hour.

Each of the groups is asked to give a brief feed-back in plenary concerning their conclusions.

### *Part 2*

In plenary, everyone is asked to discuss the issues raised by this role play in more depth using the following questions as a guide:

#### Part A: The role play

- What did it feel like to act in the role play? Was it difficult for the actors to get into role? If so, why? What was the hardest aspect of getting into role, and what was the easiest part?
- What did the special observers record about the arguments used by each of the players, and what impressions do they have? Were the arguments based mostly on reason or in emotion? Where did the arguments come from? Was it easier to find arguments for or against the candidates?
- What did the ordinary observers record about the discussion in general and what impressions do they have?
- Did the participants and observers notice any difference between the first role play round and between the second when the clues for finding a solution were introduced?
- Did the meeting produce an outcome which was satisfactory for everyone?
- What alternative solutions could have been reached, if any?

#### Part B: Looking at reality

- Does the role play have any relevance for daily reality? What are the similarities and differences to realities you may have experienced or do experience? Did anything seem exaggerated?
- Which of the characters most faithfully reflects attitudes common in society?
- To which extent can one relate the arguments used and the way the role play took place to issues of prejudice / exclusion? Do economic and personal interests not also play a large role? Are they, in fact, more important?

*What follows is a summary of the two parts of the plenary discussion that took place:*

#### Plenary discussion – Part A

- the parent behaved irrationally, upserdly and clearly homophobic – this was an accurate depiction of the way parents can behave when confronted with GLBT's
- the school student representative's role was rather strange and contradictory
- the characters often said 'I don't want to judge, but...' – followed by a judgement
- personal motivation / interests can play a strong role
- all members of the group had prejudices, however, some could hide them better than others

- emotionally-based prejudices come from a lack of knowledge and/or experience, as we then easily take something we hear for a general truth
- most characters did not consider the candidates' teaching qualities, but rather used emotional arguments or only focussed on the candidates' other characteristics
- though the candidates' qualifications were good in all cases, they weren't focussed on, resulting in the fact that almost only 'negative' aspects were left, which were almost only used in a negative way (though they could have also been used in a positive way)
- the role play proved the relevance of other people's opinions (role models are necessary!) and that there are selfish explanations for many positions that were taken and arguments that were used
- manipulation took place by the chair of the group, who often countered arguments
- the body language that was used was very descriptive of the people's roles/characters
- tension inside persons (because of 'hidden' reasons) lead to tensions in the group
- though there wasn't much rationality during the discussion, rational reasons prevailed in the final choice of the candidate
- in the end, the most politically correct candidate was chosen rather than the most rational (particularly if one were to ignore the three specific characteristics)

#### Plenary discussion – Part B

- There were dominant and suppressed members of the discussion
- Everyone acted as if they have the key to solve the problem
- The priest behaved very differently from what was expected
- The city council representative's role was very convincing. He had hidden agenda, but could hide it well behind his job
- Everyone has their own hidden agenda when they attend meetings
- It is important to find out why the people were really against the candidates rather than simply labelling them
- The barrier was lower to consider the representative of the black community than it was to consider the gay applicant – this is a question of the development of society
- It is good to be aware that there are always both hidden and public agendas, but one shouldn't 'touch' the hidden agendas, as one can hardly be sure about what they are. Thus, one should be aware that it is possible, but one should not simply assume things.
- During the role play and also now in plenary there was hardly any discussion about the candidate who had been in prison

Points to think about:

- Where do these prejudices come from?
- How do we use prejudices?
- How much can we explain with prejudice?

#### **Home groups**

After the discussion on the role play was concluded, we gathered in the home groups in order to discuss and evaluate the day and our progress and social atmosphere in general.

## **Info Market**

Many different organisations were represented at this study session. For this reason, we found it very important to tap into and share all this potential by offering a possibility for getting to know each other's organisations, exchanging material and ideas, asking each other questions and starting discussions.

An info market was organised on Tuesday evening for this purpose, during which participants presented their organisations to each other in three groups, focussing on their organisations in general as well as on their work in the field of social exclusion and minorities at school. Many visual materials such as posters, flip-charts with diagrams and explanations, leaflets etc. were used during the presentations, for which each organisation had its own stand.

After the info market, the stands were left up for the rest of the week, in order to allow participants to get a look at organisations that had been in other groups than theirs.

## Wednesday, March 21, 2001

After presenting the programme of the day, the team introduced Henrike Eisfeld, who then spoke and worked with us throughout the morning on the general topic of minority-majority relations.

### Theatre of the Oppressed

After being introduced to the participants and vice versa, Henrike Eisfeld began by giving input on the Theatre of the Oppressed and its creator, Augusto Boal. What follows is a summary of her input:

*The theatre of the oppressed was created by Augusto Boal, a Brazilian actor, in the 1970's. He created it in order to make oppression visible. Boal worked a lot with Brecht, who wanted people to learn from theatre, but found the audience to be too passive. For this reason, he invented methods to make them more active and to make them participate.*

*Boal developed a variety of methods for the Theatre of the Oppressed: he started out with the 'statue theatre', focussing on how oppression can be changed into non-oppression. He used 'newspaper theatre' as method of making people aware of what is written in papers and what is not. The 'invisible theatre' was used by Boal to act out scenes in public, in order to start a discussion between actors and the 'audience' (passers-by).*

*Augusto Boal had to flee Brazil, and then Peru, to end up in Europe. Unexpectedly, he found the Theatre of the Oppressed very useful here, too. Now he is back in Brazil, where he went into politics as a member of the city council of Rio de Janeiro.*

*In the 'Forum Theatre', the method we will use at this study session, a scene about oppression is acted out in front of the audience. Then it is played again, this time the audience can step into the role of the actors and change things, try out different alternatives. The aim is to find a solution or a way out of the displayed oppression.*

After this introduction, working groups were held that had the task to prepare for the planned Forum Theatre. What follows are the instructions and questions that were given to these work groups:

We are splitting up in small groups of 4-5 people. You will be in these groups for about 20 minutes. Your task is to talk about how minority-majority relations work or worked out in your school. Below you will find some questions that might help you talk about this, but you don't have to stick to these questions if you have enough to talk about already. Please make sure that everybody gets a chance to talk about the situation in their own school. I would like you to pick one of the stories of one of your schools and make a little theatre scene out of it. The scene should be max. 2-3 minutes long. Later we will go back in plenary and decide which of the scenes we want to see acted out, so be prepared to play your own scene!

Here are some questions if you get stuck talking about the situation in your school:

- Are/were there any minority people visible in your school?
- What kinds of minorities do/did they belong to?
- How many people from different minority groups are/were there in your school?
- How do/did people in your school talk about them?
- Are/were you yourself visible as a member of a minority in your school?
- Is/was it cool to be in favour of against the minority groups in your school?
- Do/did you have contact with members of a minority group in your school?
- Are/were there any kinds of activities organised by the school to foster the relations between minority and majority school students?
- Do/did these activities work?

After these work groups, five different scenes were briefly introduced by the groups that had developed them. These were as follows:

1. 'Bible and cigarettes', dealing with the relation among groups of school students with different interests and approaches to dealing with each other
2. 'To be or not to be (gay)', dealing with coming out and teachers ignoring gay issues at school
3. 'MacAlbania', dealing with tensions between Macedonian and Albanian school students in Macedonia
4. 'Language barriers', dealing with difficulties encountered by school students from linguistic minorities

As there was not enough time to work with all proposed scenes, the participants voted on which one they wanted to see and deal with most. 'To be or not to be (gay)' was chosen.

Following this, the scene was acted out once completely for the participants to observe. Then it was acted out a second time, during which the participants had the opportunity to change the situation by taking the place of one of the actors and changing the way he/she was dealing with the situation.

During this process, the following solutions were found for improving the situation displayed in the scene:

- Change of attitude: changing from pushing the issue away to creating acceptance
- Creating space for alternative questions
- More openness
- The victim goes from passive to pro-active
- Not apologising for being different
- Not accepting the victim's role and thereby making the arguments irrelevant. However, even if one can confront the aggressor, one is still a victim and it is still a difficult situation.
- Lend support to the oppressed (by the non-oppressed)
- Showing the similarities, not the differences

After this, 'Bible and cigarettes', the play that had come in second place was acted out in the same way. However, in this case, it took three tries to change the scene to the better.

In this case, the solutions that were found are as follows:

- A solution is not always necessary – it is sometimes best to simply leave people alone
- Readiness to talk
- Debate instead of accusation
- Finding common grounds
- Importance of leaving people alone when one is not invited to join them
- Respect, not necessarily acceptance (but: what can we respect?)
- Mutual respect
- Positive intervention of teachers
- Asking for help
- One should not excuse oneself for the way one is
- A public 'NO' to oppression
- Exclude the oppressor instead of oneself
- Make links through reversing reality
- Being an example

After this discussion, the participants received further information on books about the Theatre of the Oppressed and Augusto Boal:

- Boal, Augusto: Theatre of the Oppressed (out of print), 1979
- Boal, Augusto: Games for Actors and Non-Actors / 1992, Routledge / ISBN 0415061555
- Boal, Augusto: Legislative Theatre: Using Performance to Make Politics / 1998, Routledge / ISBN 0415182417

## **Gay-Straight Alliances**

To conclude the morning, Henrike Eisfeld tells about Gay-Straight Alliances at high schools in the USA as a working example of co-operation of different groups at schools in order to prevent exclusion.

### Gay-Straight Alliances information:

- Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (National Network of Gay-Straight Alliances): [www.glsen.org](http://www.glsen.org)
- Gay-Straight Alliance Network (California): [www.gsanetwork.org](http://www.gsanetwork.org)
- GSA Webring: [www.youthresource.com/high/webring.htm](http://www.youthresource.com/high/webring.htm)

Finally, Henrike Eisfeld was thanked enthusiastically by the team and participants for her very valuable contributions to the study session.

## **SWOT Exercise – Situation of Minorities in Education, Problems and Solutions**

In order to:

- Discuss and define the concrete problems linked with social exclusion in school,
- Discuss and define holistic and specific solutions to the defined problems,
- Define the actors, their responsibilities, and their opportunities/possibilities to improve the situation at school and
- Discuss how the defined actors can contribute to solving the problems

And work towards finding possible solutions to these problems, we began with an individual SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis of the situation of minorities in schools.

After each participant had finished his/her individual SWOT analysis, the results were brought together and problem areas were defined in plenary. This was done by means of sticking post-it notes on a board and organising them in such a way that they fit together in groups, which involved quite a bit of general discussion on the problems themselves.

The problem areas that were found out were: racism, xenophobia and related issues, self-inflicted exclusion, institutional/structural problems, society, content of education and communication.

Once the problem areas were defined, the participants divided themselves into groups dealing with one of the problem areas. First, the groups had an initial discussion on the specific problem area they chose to work with. This implied defining the problem thoroughly, including the sources of the problem/-s, why and how they usually appear in school, and what methods are normally used to solve these problems. The groups also defined the actors involved and their responsibilities.

After this, the participants wrote possible solutions to their problem area on post-it notes, which were then discussed by the group. The group then placed the different post-it notes on a scheme according to how possible it is that they can come true/be implemented and how much they are wanted/needed. According to the result of this 'feasibility exercise', the group made a list of what best possible solutions the different actors can use to improve the problem situation.

*What follows are the guidelines for the work groups on 'situation of minorities in education':*

The group should appoint a chairperson and a reporter, preferably someone who have not already chaired or reported a wg previously during the study session. The group will decide for itself whether to take a short coffee break, or to continue with the work.

The aims of this working group are to look into one specific problem area related to the situation of minorities in education, and to define and explore why this problem is a problem and what role and responsibilities the different actors have. The group should also discuss the current methods used to solve this problem, and develop alternative solution approaches.

A. Definition of the problem area

- Why does this problem appear?
- Who are the actors, and what legal and moral responsibilities do they have?

B. Solutions

- Which are the existing methods to solve the problem?
- Do they fulfil their purpose?
- Which are the alternative methods to solve the problem? Discuss 4-6 possible methods for solving the problem you have defined. Put down each of them on a separate A4 sheet.

C. Evaluate the alternative methods using the feasibility/needs scale

This method is used to evaluate how possible it is that the solutions are implemented/carried out and how effective the proposed method is for actually solving the very problem. This evaluation will help us to get a clear picture of how we can solve the problem, and from which point we could start working.

How to proceed:

- Discuss each of the possible solutions separately (feasibility and need)
- According to the outcome of the discussion, place the solution on the Feasibility/needs scale.
- Write down the reasons for placing it where you did.
- Repeat this method for all (4-6) possible solutions that you discussed.

D. Preparation of the presentation in plenary

In the presentation, the group should present a definition of the problem area and the alternative solutions placed on the feasibility/needs scale. After the presentation in plenary, there will be a discussion on the problems and solutions.

*The work groups then gave the following presentations in plenary:*

Group 1 – Communication

1. a) This problem appears because of language barriers between people and because of the misunderstandings that happen when people do not understand what you write and what you want to say.  
b) The actors are on one hand students on the other hand teachers, principles, the ministry of education as well as other authorities. It is important for them to teach properly, not to exclude any students and to help as much as they can.

2. This depends on the region and on the current situation.
3. Extra classes can be organised for those with difficulties, as well as supplementary evening schools to support the learning process.
4. Special classes devoted to developing the language, getting to know each other, talking about problems and practising the language can be a solution.

### Group 2 – Visible and invisible forms of self-inflicted exclusion

Why does this problem exist?

- As part of survival tactics
- To avoid addressing the reason for the discrimination
- To avoid conflict
- Out of a lack of interest

Solutions:

- More good role models
- The creation of a safe environment
- Communication and information
- Showing the benefits of participating
- Speaking openly

Conclusion:

We can solve this problem, and there are definitely solutions. It will in any case be the effort on the part of the minority, because they are the ones responsible for this type of exclusion. However, the reasons for self-inflicted exclusion happening are to be found in society.

### Group 3 – Content of education

- **Language** – As there is national language education, this causes a problem for immigrants and ethnic minorities that come from a different language background, as there are no (adequate) structures or support for them to integrate in school. Solutions:
  - language courses for adults (specifically for parents of immigrant children) and for the children to cover gaps
  - support from the government for language courses for children running parallel to the regular national curriculum
  - education in their mother tongue for larger ethnic minority groups so that they can be self-sufficient
  - training for teachers to address the needs of ethnic minorities and immigrants
- **Curricula** – Often, there are problems with the curricula for immigrant children, as they have different gaps in comparison to the locals. Solutions:
  - school should provide preparatory courses for immigrant children as well as training for teachers when it comes to minority issues
  - the subject matter should address all groups specifically and offer a diversity of examples (curricula should be redesigned)

- **Religious issues / education** – Often, the compulsory teaching and learning of religion in schools comes over more as brainwashing rather than as the teaching of matters of religion, and there are few or no alternative possibilities for children that do not follow the religion in question (e.g. non-Christian). Solutions:
  - teach the history of religion and spirituality
  - train and/or recruit secular professionals to teach religious matters. A problem with this could be a lack of professional staff, meaning that this would take time to sort out.
- **Problem of globalisation of subject contents / matters** – The perspectives must be extended to a global level.
- **Sexual education** – This is not conducted in a practical way, as there is much resistance from the system. This results in there being not enough sexual education, exclusively heterosexual education, sexual education that is only related to sexually transmitted diseases or only to safety, and that is conducted in a very academic manner. Solutions:
  - The following elements should be added: homosexual education, sexual growth, sexual issues and sexual abuse
  - Sexual education should be more open and varied, more attractive and closer to young people’s lives, thus not only dealing with prevention
  - Changing mentalities is a long-term process and can be achieved only through education
- **Disabilities** – The exclusion of physically and mentally challenged school students through the education system. Solutions:
  - Every school should have structures and facilities to accommodate school students with disabilities
  - It should become normal that every school student has the right to education suited for him/her

#### Group 4 – Institutional / Structural problems

1. Human Rights are abused by not letting people vote and by not giving money to educate immigrants – this is due to a lack of political will. Institutional discrimination can be defined as legalised discrimination.

The problem is that people are excluded due to the application of the law, and the political will is ‘owned’ by groups of people. The question is why they do not have the will to pass laws against discrimination. However, the quality of the laws that are passed depends on the situation of the minority in question.

Definition of institutional discrimination:

- Laws that exist and discriminate
- Laws that don’t exist and could prevent discrimination
- Laws that exist and could prevent discrimination but aren’t implemented

The actors in the state:

- The persons involved in the decision-making processes
- Administration
- The courts / judicial system

Discussion points and results: the state should give fair and equal opportunities to everybody.

## 2. Methods:

- extra education for immigrants in their mother tongue and for students who don't understand the lessons because of language barriers
- lobbying if a law should be passed
- civil initiative: petitioning (collecting signatures) and thereby using the media in order to change the public opinion
- civil initiative: forming groups of people of the same interest (such as unions or organisations)
- voting
- participation in the decision-making process or running for the parliament
  - youth parliaments (however, these are not very useful)
  - voting age 0?
  - a youth quota in the regular parliaments – this would be a democratic way of involving young people in the decision-making processes
  - inform young people about informal and formal ways of participating
  - raise children in a different way in order to change the institutions and society in the long term
  - participate through the media
  - participate and gain influence through groups of same interest
  - lobbying
  - active participation in the decision-making process

### Group 5 – Society

In order to answer the questions and discuss them, the group first had to define its problem area. Society is so broad and wide that they decided to divide the topic into sub-problems.

Fact: because school is a reflection of society, trends in society affect trends in school.

How?

- through legislation
  - through curricula
  - through the teachers
  - through the students themselves
  - through the social climate in society (i.e. if there is war)
  - through the dominating religion
- ➔ positive and negative influences

The group thought of some ways / solutions which school and minorities at school can benefit from:

- more real power for student councils at school through legislation and democracy at school
- teach critical thinking
- better salaries for teachers
- more resources spent on education
- a neutral subject that combines / takes into account religion, philosophy, ethics
- self-evaluation of school student councils

### Group 6 – Racism, xenophobia and related issues

Why does this problem area appear?

- it doesn't appear, it has always been there
- society needs 'black sheep' and scapegoats
- due to people who are frustrated by picking enemies
- through the struggle for power and advantages
- capitalism and materialism controls the top-down approach, which suppresses people coming from the bottom up

Who are the actors, and what legal and moral responsibilities do they have?

- all of society are the actors, thus everyone bears the responsibility

Which are the existing methods to solve the problem?

- step by step and with a bottom-up approach, working towards sensibilisation of people
- grassroots education, especially with young people in school
- positive influence – there need to be good, positive examples

Do they fulfil their purpose?

- yes, step by step and slowly
- they can reform non-efficient and non-progressive educational system
- work towards making people face xenophobia face to face, eye to eye
- prevention starts in the classrooms
- non-formal education is needed to make the abovementioned work
- is one personally not a bit discriminating or excluding anybody just because he / she is non-sympathetic to you or has differences...?

Which are the alternative methods to solve the problem?

- revolution – violent or non-violent
- by being an example
- to teach youth to be critical and re-think attitudes and beliefs of social culture and to promote communication and the discussion of thoughts
- teaching critical analysis
- intercultural education
- keep re-thinking new teaching methods
- keep learning and thinking
- learn and execute rights
- don't silently agree with racism
- exercise one's legal rights

## Home groups

After these presentations, the home groups gathered for their daily meeting.

## Celebration of the Differences

In the evening, a 'Celebration of the Differences' was organised. The purpose of this celebration was to show and celebrate the positive and enriching sides of being member of a minority and to show and celebrate that it is positive and enriching to have minorities influences in society. Participants were asked to show what makes them as a member of a minority special and different from the national society and/or to show non-stereotype parts of national culture and in general the richness there is in each country thanks to the differences there are among individuals and groups in society.

Thus, this was a social event showing how much more fun and interesting life is because and not although we are all different from each other, celebrating diversity and commonalities.

## Thursday, March 22, 2001

Thursday's topic of the day was 'preventing social exclusion'. After the introduction to the day, an 'open plenary session' was held.

### Open plenary session

The open plenary session provided the participants with opportunities to discuss topics that had not been taken up previously during the session, and to continue discussions that had not yet been finished, as there was a number of different ideas and questions that were as yet unresolved. The aim of the open plenary was also to sum up the discussions and outcomes of the past days, so that all had a common understanding of the problems and solutions of social exclusion and minorities at school. The participants were asked to bring up topics for discussion, which were then grouped to reach a greater understanding and discussed as follows:

- The complexity of social exclusion
- Involvement of ethnic minorities in the democratic process at school, and in school student bodies.
- The difference between acceptance and tolerance
- The universality of Human Rights.
- Creating role models for minority groups
- The issue of quotation of minorities and gender

#### **The complexity of social exclusion:**

The participants agreed that social exclusion at school is a very complex issue, and that the solutions to social exclusion have to reflect this complexity. Solution approaches have to vary according to the nature of the very problem. Thus it would not be wise to make or state global solutions for all the problems there are in this area, as we can only indicate the right approach for solving these problems.

#### **Involvement of ethnic minorities in the democratic process at school and in school student bodies:**

Although some participants showed an interest in discussing this particular issue, the discussion did not take place but participants agreed that this topic should not be neglected and should have special concern in schools as it touches many school students all over the Europe. Thus, one of the working groups (project planning –youth (minority) involvement and participation) worked on this issue during Thursday and continued on Friday.

#### **The difference between acceptance and tolerance:**

As this topic had already been discussed at various occasions before, the participants chose not to discuss it further.

#### **The universality of Human Rights:**

There was no particular discussion on this topic, but one of the working groups (on project planning – teaching and learning rights) included it in their work. However, the importance of human rights education – which also includes all kinds of fighting against intolerance – was once again stressed.

#### **Creating role models for minority groups:**

Several groups had, during the working groups on Wednesday afternoon, discussed the feasibility of and need for creating positive role models for minority groups. Not all agreed that it is really possible to 'create' or 'produce' new role models for these groups. However, we concluded that the issue of role models does not only comprise national and international role models, but is equally important on local level, in schools and smaller communities. Thus,

depending on the 'level' one wants to affect, it is possible to create a more positive image of various minorities, and to become/create role models for these minority groups.

In society, there is a lack of positive role models for young people from minorities, which often face difficulties in creating a positive image of belonging to a minority group for themselves and their future. The stereotype of the different minority group often comprise a negative picture of belonging to the minority, and older generations in the various minorities do not always provide young people with opportunities to identify with a different image of the very minority. These facts may create an atmosphere where people are afraid to show their minority identity, and to become role models for others. In this context, the question of whether people from minorities have an obligation to show their minority identity and to become role models was raised. From the discussion that followed, we concluded that famous people from minority groups often are or try to become role models, however, these role models sometimes tend to take advantage of their authority and fame, thus creating a 'negative' picture of belonging to that minority. Hence, it is not possible to create 'positive' role models unless the individuals from the minority group in question are able to identify with the very person. In various parts of the world, e.g. in the US, successful attempts have been made to affect the stereotypes and role models of certain minorities.

The problem of stereotypes and lacking positive role models can partly be overcome through a greater awareness of the situation of minorities, especially amongst people in various positions in society, i.e. politicians, musicians, actors, etc. However, a great deal of work to improve the situation can be done on local level, and in the persons' own community and personal sphere.

#### **The issue of quotation of minorities and gender:**

The discussion offered a variety of points of view and aspects of the quotation of minorities and gender. These were as follows:

- Societies and schools should be able to accommodate everybody without having to use quotas. For this purpose, special and individual systems of integration should be made and used.
- Schools may offer special help to the ones who got in through the quota system.
- Quotation enables people to take part and thus empowers them.
- Quotation under-powers the minorities.
- Quotation is only empowerment of individuals, not of minority groups.

#### **Prevention approaches: Project Planning in Work Groups**

The groups checked which solution to the problems found the day before was most feasible and most needed (by using the feasibility-needs scale) and were to develop a concrete project for this solution.

The feasibility-needs scales had been designed on sheets of paper on which participants marked the solutions they had come up with to the problems they had found according to how feasible and how needed they were. This made it possible to easily identify which solution / project would be most useful and most successful.

The work groups were introduced with the explanation that the projects should really be doable, such that organisations could later take the outlines made at the study session and use them in their work. The following guidelines for project planning were handed out:

## Guidelines for Project Planning

Here are some ideas about how to structure your project planning discussions. The tips are formulated as questions, which you can use as a framework for planning your project effectively.

1. Need for the project
  - Why is this project needed or necessary?
  - Why is this project important?
2. Target group
  - Who does the project address?
  - Who will benefit from the project?
  - What is/are the target group(s)?
3. Basic idea
  - What is your project idea?
4. Motivation
  - Why do you want to do this project?
5. Aims and objectives
  - What are the main goals of this project?
  - Ideally, what would you like to achieve through this project?
  - What are the objectives of your project?
  - Which concrete results do you foresee?
6. Programme of activities
  - What activities will make up the programme of your project?
  - What is the time frame of your project (long, medium, short-term)?
  - When will your project begin and when will it end?
7. Actors
  - Who will be the main actors of the project?
  - Who will carry the project (team, organisation, partners, support structures)?
  - How will the target group of the project be involved?
  - Will the target group be active participants of the whole process (planning, implementation and evaluation)?
8. Resources (human, financial, organisational, time, in kind)
  - What kind of resources will you need?
  - What resources do you already have?
9. Evaluation
  - What kind of evaluation do you foresee in this project?
  - Who will carry out and be involved in the evaluation?
  - When will you carry out your evaluation activities?
  - What kind of monitoring activities do you foresee during the implementation of the project?
10. Follow-up
  - What kind of follow-up activities do you foresee as a result of this project?

➔ Four factors in a successful project!

Successful project management is about connecting together four different and sometimes conflicting factors.

<b>The need or problem</b>	<b>The idea and vision</b>
Projects work best when the people developing them understand and appreciate the needs and problems they have to tackle. It is important to properly evaluate the need or problem. What is its root cause? What are the symptoms? What is the scale of it? For whom is it a problem?	Projects need a vision to unite all their activities and efforts. It is from the vision that strategies, objectives and work plans flow. The big idea behind the project should be clear enough to show how the project will make a significant and sustainable difference to the need or the problems.
<b>The opportunity for the project</b>	<b>The capacity</b>
Projects need to have or to create the space in which to operate. Projects need to be actively supported and backed with more than just money. There must be support for the project from key people and an active participation from the target group.	Projects need the right balance of skills, energy, resources and organisation to get up and going and deliver results. They need to be designed so that they are able to make an impact and create results.

*What follows are the project descriptions as developed by the work groups:*

### **Project development group on the content of education**

#### ***Project: Integration of minority issues and visibility of minorities in education***

After an exchange of personal experiences concerning minorities in school and how curricula and the way of organising school changes their situation or puts them into one, the group brainstormed on what might be possible solutions for the problems mentioned. The following problems were mentioned: European or national centred historical and social education, confessional religious education, sexual education and the lack of integration of disabled students, asylum-seekers and immigrants. The group came up with the following project:

#### **1. Background and importance of the project**

Education is the first step to develop consciousness and personality. To promote inclusion of minorities it is important to start thinking of and dealing with minority issues from the beginning of education on.

Fresh, clear and more information of better quality on minority issues are needed, which demands better preparation and awareness of people in the education process.

Awareness for minority issues should be created through education. This can happen for example through more and better information and positive role models.

Thus the idea of the group was to form a group or a coalition of minorities.

#### **2. Target group**

The target group are all stakeholders in education, especially school students, teachers, students, professors and teacher students. In a second part of the project, the aim is to address the government and decision makers in education in order to change curricula and legislation.

### **3. Basic idea**

The basic idea is to form an awareness and pressure group or pool of local minority organisations, non organised minorities, NGO's and individuals supporting the project.

This pool addresses schools with the large number of different inputs and lectures that they are able to offer the schools. They offer expertise, information and contacts for interested students and teachers. In this way, non-formal education is integrated into formal education and can help to understand and learn about differences in society.

After the project with the inputs at schools is running for a while successfully, those organising the project will look for an 'open room', a space preferably in a school, where the pool meets and the different organisations involved build up a library offering information on minority issues. The library should offer a large variety of books, newspapers, video material and reports from seminars, study sessions and other events, in order to give information about minorities themselves and the public opinion on minorities.

The next step would be to check about the existing legal rights of minorities in the country and to ask the schools involved if they together with the pool and pools from other cities or regions want to address the government to change the curricula. Finally, step, the parliament would be approached to change the legislation.

### **4. Motivation**

The motivation is to promote inclusion and make minorities more visible and to include minority issues in the curricula.

### **5. Aims and objectives**

- Offer more information of better quality about minority issues
- Offer support to teachers and schools
- Create schools that are more open to their environment and the surrounding community
- Create awareness and a pressure group for minorities
- Include minority issues in the curricula and minorities in the school community
- Integration and visibility of minorities in the community
- Create 'open rooms' and libraries
- Change the curricula
- Final aim: the change of legislation in all countries where minorities do not have equal rights

### **6. Programme of activities**

The project is divided into two steps. The first step is directed towards schools, school students and teachers. They should profit from the experience and knowledge minority groups and other NGO's have through lessons run by members of the pool. For these lessons, the aim is to see what the examples of best practise are and how the lessons have influenced the school students and the social climate at school. The next step is to develop a curriculum that implements dealing with minority issues for every school. This second step is directed towards the government and the decision-makers in the field of education. The following activities are foreseen:

- Form the pool of minority organisations, NGO's and individuals by contacting them and explaining the concept of the project to them and by making clear that they gain the possibility to give school students information about their organisations / themselves and become more visible.
- At the first meeting of the pool, it needs to become clear what can be offered (capacities, experts, topics, material, methods) and what the common interests within

the group are. The members of the pool should be experts in certain fields but not all of them are expected to have experience in running a lesson. Therefore it is important that everybody in the pool has / is provided with training material on how to run interactive lessons at school (methods, exercises).

- A brochure with all the possible workshops and facilitations there can be run will be made. This brochure should give an insight into the background and objectives of the project, an introduction to all the organisations in the pool and a description of the lectures and projects (at school) we are able to run. Furthermore, all contact addresses should be mentioned.
- These brochures should then be sent to schools as well as to schools and universities that educate teachers.
- Wait for their reply and requests and then start working by giving lectures or doing projects with interested schools in the various fields.
- Workshops will be organised (all of them should be interactive and make people think about the way they are thinking, encourage critical thinking etc.), and teachers and students provided with useful contact addresses and material.
- The involved schools will be asked if one of them can provide the space for the 'open room'. The open room should also be a meeting room for the pool, but its primary aim is to create an open space for students, where they can find literature and other material (music, video, CD-ROMs) on minority issues and where they can contact members of the pool.
- No matter if the pool succeeded in finding the space for an open room or not, the project has to be evaluated together with the students, teachers and headteachers involved at this point. The evaluation is important to see how the pool's working methods might have to be changed during the single lectures and to which extent the project has fulfilled its objectives. Depending on the evaluation, the pool might decide to continue giving lectures before going on to the next step.
- A detailed change of curricula (and school system) should be developed, which includes objective sexual education, non-national/European centred history and social science, without confessional religious education, which integrates immigrants, national ethnic minorities and disabled people into it. These changes should be addressed towards the decision makers on education policy in the country. If possible, this is done in co-operation with the schools that have participated in the project as well as pools from other cities, the schools they have worked with and the national umbrella organisations of the organisations working in the local pools.

The evaluation of the schools on the project should be part of the proposal towards the decision makers to show them how the project worked and that the results have been positive. Through the evaluation, the pool can also show the decision makers examples of best practise.

In parallel to this, the aim is to set up a network of regional pools, in order to exchange experience and ideas for the further work.

## **7. Actors**

- a) Minority groups, individuals, other NGO's. In the second phase of the project, the schools should act as actors too.
- b) The co-ordinating committee of the pool – the pool itself, or, depending on the country it can e.g. also be a ministry. Support structures might be national or European umbrella organisations of the organisations participating in the pool.
- c) As school students and their organisations are seen as an essential partner for the pool they will also be involved in the whole process, they might also be the ones that initiate

the pool. Especially for the second step when it comes to addressing the government they and their national structure can be very important.

## 8. Resources

- a) The main resource needed are volunteers that are willing to set up the pool, provide the pool with training material, co-ordinate and administrate the work of the pool. For the open room and the lectures information, books, other material and addresses of organisations active in the field of minority issues and rights, the national legislation to be able to show the legal situation of minorities, newspapers or selected articles on the current situation of minorities and social exclusion in the country. Furthermore, a meeting room is needed and one of the offices of one of the participating organisations should be used as a co-ordination office. Each pool should give itself a structure with, for example, an elected co-ordinating committee.
- b) Funding can be requested e.g. from the local community, foundations, trade unions, enterprises, the European bodies and national governments. The money is mainly needed for the administration, the publications, advertisements, the open room, the literature and the furniture in it. If it is possible to receive funding it would be also good to make a research on the situation of minorities in the country in general and the community in particular.

## 9. Evaluation

- a) By the pool after the project is set up (meaning as soon as the schools had time to reply and did so or not) and in general more often in the starting phase of the project
- b) By the school students and teachers, directly after one session or after there have been several lectures at one school
- c) In general, an evaluation should be done at least once per school year

## 10. Follow-up

As this project is not only long term but, if possible, never ending, no concrete follow-up is planned. Because even if the sexual education is changed, history and religion are taught in a more objective way and the minorities are visible and integrated in school, we think that school should be opened to its environment and consult external experts all the time, providing more quality information on every aspect education.

## **Project group on stereotypes and prejudices, including how to fight prejudices and stereotypes, and how to promote awareness**

### ***Project: Stereotypes don't work!***

#### **Aim of the project:**

The main aim of the project is to provide a resource for teachers and students to prevent stereotypes, and to change the behaviour of young people from negative to positive outlooks regarding minority youth and people.

#### **Description of the project:**

This resource project is a unique and interesting venture which was developed at the joint study session between IGLYO and OBESSU. A group of six young people who were particularly concerned with the issue of stereotypes in school and in society in general initiated this project. The basic idea of the project is that the team develops a manual or resource booklet for teachers and students to use as a guide for information-seeking and resources. The information that is to be in the manual regards information that already exists but may currently not be used to its full potential. The group felt that though it would be interesting to write new information it is more useful to make the most of that which already exists.

The group will begin their task with a needs analysis to ensure that the target group is reached, and that this is done with the information it requires and needs most.

The resource guide will be designed using friendly communication, to ensure that it is accessible to all who need it. There will also be the possibility to translate the resource into several different languages. There will also be a reference guide for users to look up books in their homes.

To accompany the resource guide, the group will arrange to build and co-ordinate teams in their respective countries in order to run workshops where they are requested by teachers or students. To ensure that the information is presented correctly in the case where a team is not used for this purpose, a section of the guide will deal with offering skills to those who wish to present the information themselves. The team feels that such a facility will ensure that the information is relayed in a responsible and accurate manner. Workshop methods and possible sources of information and material will also be included for the use of the teachers and students, and all of the information in the guide will also be available on the web pages of both organisations, to which as many links will be made as possible. The group wishes to offer a full range of issues in the booklet and presentations so that school students and teachers will see the bigger picture regarding minorities, stereotypes and exclusion. As the project develops, the group hopes to produce a video and other visual aids to accompany the booklet.

### **Project time frame:**

This project is divided into three time sections:

The first section concerns starting the project and writing the material for the information pack. This stage is estimated to take four months with tasks divided between the group of six members of the two organisations. Each group member will have tasks that they carry out in their respective country, and the group aims to meet at the end of July for a developing meeting.

The second phase of the project is the development stage whereby each member of the group evaluates their section of the tasks and further develops the design and tasks set out for them. The project should by then be ready to begin its functions. During the full life-span of the project there will be evaluation of the work which will involve a follow-up evaluation after the school students have met with a representative of theirs. This will offer a space where the students can fully explain how they feel the project affected their lives and attitudes. The group also feels that this process will offer the project more valuable aspects in terms of meeting the needs of the target group.

Schools and groups will be reached by using a standard letter inquiring if the school wishes to have the project brought to it. Of course the group is aware that it is at this point that it will have to encourage the deciding body of the school that this process is essential.

During this phase the group and their respective teams will work on closely networking with related organisations.

The group feels that this stage of the development should be ongoing in order to respond to the evaluation processes that will take place throughout the life span of the project.

The final stage, which is also ongoing, is the stage where the project reaches its goal. This phase is the time in the life-span of the project where it is in full function and has a culture of development. Of course reaching goals in projects are relative and things change, as do the needs of society – therefore the group feels that though there may be periods where the goal is being reached on all levels this period may not last very long and the project will again require further development.

**Cost of the project:**

The group estimated that the majority of the expenses for this project will consist of printing costs and material. The team have arranged one team meeting to take place in four months from the beginning of this project, the major costs here will be flight tickets for the group members.

Materials and stationary as well as communication costs are the other major costs relating to the project.

**Learning and teaching rights*****Project: Networks for non-formal rights education*****Project aim:**

The empowerment of all interested, involved individuals, majority and minority groups is the aim of the project.

**Objectives:**

The most important objective is awareness raising and encouraging the development of initiatives / projects which would help to promote the aim described above.

**Description:**

The project is organised at a national level with strong stress on the work of the local level, as the group believes that the national project can only function through the local level.

A happening such as a study session, workshop or seminar is organised (which one is chosen depends on the resources and situation of the organisers). The happening is a meeting of school student council representatives, youth NGO's, teacher students and other possible partners such as human or minority rights organisations. It is always possible for other or more partners to be involved – this depends on their will and specific national circumstances.

**Programme:**

The time frame for the project is annual.

As a first step in the programme, topic-related programme elements for the background and preparation of the project should be researched, in order to clearly define the background of terms and problems that are to be discussed. There are some aspects that need to be taken into account particularly, namely the history of human and minority rights, documents and charters of rights (Council of Europe, United nations etc.) and the actual situation and challenges in society should be defined.

The programme of the event should be the result of good preparation and should include games, workshops, lectures and other useful methods to work with and materials on human and minority rights, which would help to create good working spirit and develop good results.

General organisational programme elements that are essential for the success of the project and that the organising team must keep in mind are the project development and administration, networking as well as public relations.

**Resources:**

Both human and financial resources will be necessary, however, this depends highly on what exactly is to be organised.

### **Evaluation, follow-up and monitoring:**

Participants should make partial reports during the event, with which the team would later prepare the final report.

A website should be created during the event and up-dated afterward, presenting the achieved results and offering the possibility for interactive info-sharing.

All the work during and after the event will be monitored by the prep team and the funding bodies.

### **Achievements:**

The achievements that are hoped for are the establishment of new contacts, networks and co-operations, for the participants and organisers to gain knowledge, personal development and the strengthening of self-confidence of those participating. A very important outcome that should be achieved is that participants are motivated and gain enthusiasm to start an initiative of their own, that they get ideas for such an initiative and that awareness is increased in general.

### **Youth (minority) involvement and participation**

#### ***Title of the project: Open your mind and dive into diversity!***

- The target group is youth minorities. What kind of minorities and which groups specifically are part of the target group depends on the particular country in which the project takes place.
- Campaigns should take place on what it means to participate and what one can gain from it, using posters, videos, TV-clips, radio and newspapers.
- Theme days will be organised on local level by resources centres where young people are also recruited.
- After this, seminars or workshops for the recruited youth on national level should be organised.
- Materials with guidelines or manuals should be published on:
  - How to participate
  - What are possible ways / methods of involvement of youth minorities
  - How to organise projects (e.g. with the COMENIUS Handbook)
  - What the rights of the minority youth are
  - Resource centres
- After all the information has been gathered and research work has been done, a website should be made to provide all the interested people with useful information about and gathered during the project.
- As the final step, an international meeting should be organised with the aim to exchange experience, knowledge and information.

### **Public awareness-raising**

1. The **aim** of this project is to make minorities feel safe, validated, accepted and respected within the group of majority.
2. **Target groups** are minority as well as majority, because both live within the community which should function as a whole, e.g. gays and lesbians in school.

3. **The programme:** As a first concrete step in a project, a forum for homosexual and homosexual-friendly youth should be organised to get into dialogue with queer and queer-friendly role models / adults (parents, politicians, community leaders) about needs and change for gay and lesbian youth. The idea behind the forum is to raise awareness and create change for queer and straight youth, to change the situation and include gay youth in the public environment, to help them to be the equal part of it and also to give gay youth visible role models and to give public positive gay role models. This should result in a discussion in the media, community and within the society of gay and lesbian youth issues that would help to create change for all the parties in the society.
4. **Workshop:**

A workshop for youth should be organised starting with a GLBT-opening by sharing personal experience, introducing the groups to each other and giving an introduction to the info packte (see below).

Following this, the main work should depend on working groups, chosen in random by participants. The only condition is that they should be mixed in order to get the best outcome. These work groups should first identify problems, then discuss how they imagine the ideal situation would work and finally conclude what the realistic solutions are.

All the proposals and solutions from the work groups should be introduced on the final forum at the end of the workshop.

The **info packet** that would be handed out during the workshop should contain:

  - information about the situation on local level and leading up to nation-wide, with newspaper articles to present the current situation
  - internet addresses
  - information about relevant organisations
5. The **actors** would be: GLBT activists in the community, GLBT students and GLBT-friendly students, liberal and progressive party leaders, head teacher(s), parent group leaders and other interested parents, student representatives, teacher representatives, education department manager and a city council board member.
6. During a **prep meeting**, the following should be done and taken into account:
  - Design the info packet, plan topics and work groups and prepare invitations
  - One day should be planned for the workshops (morning) and a forum (afternoon)
  - Resources that will be necessary: prep team, copy machine, library research, invitations, envelopes, stamps, name cards, facilitator, media coverage, flip charts, markers, facilities to hold approximately 10 people and small work group rooms, overhead projector
  - Financial costs: office supplies, facilitator, lunch and beverages, possibly the facilities
  - Content resources: people, library, common groups, common office supplies, internet
7. For the **evaluation**, participants fill out evaluation forms, which will be useful for the follow-up arranged by the prep team. The prep team evaluates how well the work went and whether the goal was met and arranges a press presentation during which a summary of the day is given and conclusion of the day are presented.

8. As a **follow-up**, work groups can be formed made up of GLBT and GLBT-friendly students who are interested in change and improvement in schools.

After three months, major players of the forum meet for the follow-up and next planning.

### **Free Afternoon**

On Thursday afternoon, the participants had the opportunity to visit the city of Budapest, after which a dinner in town was arranged.

**Friday, March 23, 2001**

After the introduction to the day, we went on to the plenary reports of the project development work groups from the day before.

### **Reports of project development work groups**

When introducing the work of the morning, participants were encouraged and informed that OBESSU and IGLYO can offer support to their work such as administration and networking which means that their project planning has a very useful meaning.

They were also informed that work group presentations may not last longer than 7 minutes (very strict), which was set as a training aspect in order for participants to train their speaking and presentation skills.

For more information on the projects themselves, please see the project descriptions from Thursday.

*What follows are the plenary presentations of the work groups from Thursday:*

#### **Group 1 – Education: promoting the inclusion of minority issues**

This group presented an introduction on transparency, which focussed on the importance of offering a large variety information, which enables schools and school students to choose what they need and are interested in.

*® for the detailed project description of this group, please see the report of Thursday!*

#### **Group 2 – Stereotypes**

**Definition & Problem:** To label a group with one or several characteristics. This is a problem because it causes limitations.

**Solution:** One can get rid of stereotypes by providing the information in the following way:

- There are minorities
- Address everybody (minority and majority)
- Provide help to fight stereotypes

**The project:** The basic idea is to organise available information, and make it accessible to the people who want it. A reference guide with the following seven chapters should be made for this purpose:

- Introduction and how to use it
- Define stereotypes
- Analysis of needs of young people / school students and teachers
- Possible workshops
- List of useful names, book titles, contact addresses, websites etc.
- Regional information & organisations
- Evaluation and follow-up

Methods for making and distributing the reference guide:

- Printed version – easily copiable format
- Web version

In order to make it possible to publish the reference guide, the group would use commercial funding, government funding and small voluntary contributions.

Visual aids for presenting and promoting the reference guide should be a flyer and standard letter, workshops, videos and other promotional material.

The national group/organisation could provide for translation into the national language, so that the reference guide is easily accessible and understandable for everyone.

**Results:** improve skills: help people become active, provide a way and means to find the needed information – networking; awareness-raising: empower the people to educate, provide a means to convince people that this needs to be done.

**Time scale:** Six people should be involved, they should each do their own task in four months. After this, an evaluation of the work should take place before the distribution of the guide. It must be kept in mind that the goal can change through the evaluation process.

It is important to be aware that this guide is not trying to get rid of stereotypes itself, but it provides the necessary information so that people have the opportunity to change the situation.

*® for the detailed project description of this group, please see the report of Thursday!*

### **Group 3 – Learning and teaching rights**

As young people are more easy to abuse and to oppress, the aim of this project is to empower them, to give them the skills they need in order to change the situation as well as to encourage them to do so.

A meeting of NGO representatives, school student councils, people studying to become teachers and other interested groups or individuals would be held. The composition of participants depends on the situation in the individual country.

Programme: the history of human and minority rights (showing actual situation); games, workshops, lectures; material on human and minority rights; input on public relations and project development

This would be an annual project and the meeting would last two to five days, depending on the needs in the country in question.

Reports would partially be made by participants during the event, and would later be finalised by the team. A website would be set up for the presentation of the results and the project would be monitored by the team as well as by the funding bodies.

Achievements hoped for with this project:

- Create links among representatives and other participants
- Give input, information on human and minority rights education
- Personal development, build up confidence
- Develop new ideas that can be included in projects

*® for the detailed project description of this group, please see the report of Thursday!*

### **Group 4 – Youth minority representation**

The name of the project would be 'Open your mind and dive into diversity!'

With this project, the group wants to touch three levels and bring them together: local, national and international level.

On local level, people would work together and analyse the situation and problems.

On national level, people proceed again, draw conclusions, and figure out how the processes in question work.

On international level a framework would be developed with the same people involved.

*® for the detailed project description of this group, please see the report of Thursday!*

### **Group 5 – Public awareness-raising**

This group wanted to raise public awareness through an interactive presentation, a workshop and forum for different groups.

During the presentation of the group, a discussion came up on why they wanted to only invite left-wing / liberal politicians to the abovementioned activities, as well as on why they wanted to invite politicians at all.

The group said that it found left-wing / liberal politicians easiest to work with in the countries its members were from and that left-wing politicians often had more new ideas. They wanted to invite politicians in general to create media attention and because they thought that the people making the decisions on what is being discussed should be present.

*® for the detailed project description of this group, please see the report of Thursday!*

### **Discussion on the Projects**

Following the plenary presentations of the various projects, space was given for discussing them. What follows is a summary:

How did the participants like the work groups?

- Very much, as they could find other people interested in working on the same topics
- A problem was that it seemed they were trying to save the whole world – some of the work groups did not limit themselves enough
- It was a great work group that was capable of trying to solve something. The projects of the work groups will most likely be carried out in the future.
- Project on education: simply changing the curricula is not a benefit: it is necessary to give school students more space to say how they want to have their education
- Is it wanted that curricula are used as a way of changing minority problems? Curricula push people into a certain behaviour – it would and could not change the problems of minorities.
- The importance of curricula for the development of values of society: the goal is to have an info pool and to update teachers, in order to provide school students with better quality information.
- Changing the curricula is not the main force – a stable foundation needs to be created so that people can be educated in this field.
- Guidelines for teachers should be created and they should have to report what they are doing, i.e. the true curriculum, what is actually happening in the classrooms. The introduction of new subjects and the topic of minorities is very important.
- We have curricula, and there always will be curricula, thus we can only work to change them to the better.
- The aim should not be to create more diversity in a diversified school system – schools should rather have a close relationship/connection with the community around school, as much can be learned from it.
- Concerning the process of socialisation in school, one must be aware that no form of education is neutral, as there is always a national ideology.

- The way to approach human beings is not to force them to do something – there must be more benefiting processes for people to actually create their own values.

How does it stand with the motivation to work? Are these projects useful for the participating organisations? Are they realistic?

- This is the only safe environment for some participants to be in on international level, thus it is very different from their usual environment
- Afraid of the situation at home, as no one asks how they can help or support the work that is going on. Funding is not a big problem if the project you have developed is a good one and one must develop contacts. Doing projects in a direct way helps to reach every country and projects are an essential part of changing things, as motivation is more valuable than money. It is important that one works with people with similar goals and respects other people's time, input and energy. Furthermore, international and national organisations are here to support such projects on local, regional, national and international level.

Proposal of two things by participants:

- Something that is useful for every national organisation: before doing a project, the steering committee should improve its personal knowledge on the theme (e.g. how exclusion works in different countries, number of immigrants, how they live in school, different models of integration etc.)
- There is a website that was developed by the Italian school student organisation UDS in co-operation with other school student organisations from European countries – this website also deals with social exclusion, immigration and related topics. It could be enlarged using the information and results from the study session and later used for upholding the networking and communication among the organisations present.

## Networking Information

This session on networking was started with a discussion on the use of networks. The most important points mentioned were:

- To exchange information
- To share experiences, to offer advice and support and avoid that the same mistakes are made again
- To support each other and lobby for a common goal
- To find a partner for a project

Related to the first question and its answers we dealt with the question of the goals of a network and what kind of network we could set up as a follow-up of this Study Session. We agreed that the network should if possible fulfil all the aims mentioned above. School student organisations can gain a lot from a network with youth minority organisations and vice versa. The information existing in each of the organisations is unique and the target groups overlap. It is important for such a network not only to exchange information, but to also make use of the mutual support such a co-operation offers.

Then we went on to approach the topic more practically, dealing with questions such as:

- How to set up a network
- What should be assured when building up a network
- Which requirements should a network partner and yourself fulfil

A network is set up through the co-operation of different partners. The first step is to see what you are aiming at when you think that you want to set up a network. When you are clear about the aims you can look for suitable partners. Suitable partners are those organisations that share the same aim(s) as your organisation does. When you aim with the network at promoting social inclusion at work places your partner could, for example, be minority organisations, trade unions and unions of employers. All partners have to share the main goal which is to promote social inclusion, maybe the union of employers also hopes to get a better reputation in public through their involvement in the network, which is not an aim of the minority organisation involved. For a successful network it is important to have a clear goal and a common understanding of it.

When you plan to set up a network and you think about aims and the use of it, you should also think about the resources you want to put into this co-operation and ask possible partners how much effort they want to put into it. Think about the feasibility of the aims of the network and if you can reach the anticipated outcome with the resources available.

Furthermore, we discussed where you can get help from for your network activities. The Council of Europe was named as a very useful institution with its programmes and projects on Human Rights, the programme and the convention for the protection of national minorities and the other European-level policies on minorities.

Aside from concrete projects and programmes of the Council of Europe and the possibility to apply for funding from the European Youth Foundation, the Council of Europe has developed a large number of useful publications. In any kind of project, one can use the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Council of Europe CD-Rom with information on the campaign Europe-Youth-Human Rights. It is interactive and available in six different languages. There are two publications on methods (the 'Education Pack' and 'Domino') that are available for free in the EYCB; furthermore there is the 'Europa ABC', which gives information about European Institutions and funding. Several more useful tools have been developed by the Council of Europe on project development and management etc., which are available at the Mobilitas centre in the building of the EYCB, and one can ask for a free copy of most of the publications in order to take it along or make copies of the relevant pages.

## **Home groups**

After this session the last meeting of the home groups took place, the day and the atmosphere and the work done throughout the whole week were discussed.

## **Free evening**

As its name already says, no activities were planned for Friday night and the majority of the participants used the opportunity to go to one of the gay bars in Budapest to enjoy the nightlife in Budapest's gay scene together.

## Saturday, March 24, 2001

The last day of the study session began with a networking session after the introduction to the day and an energiser.

### Networking session

The networking session aimed at giving the participants an overview about tools to use and providing them with skills for networking.

The first part of the session dealt with the different tools that can be used for networking and how to best make use of them and for which purpose. The positive and negative aspects of information and communication technologies, the telephone, fax and regular mail were discussed.

As we had discussed the setting up of a network etc. already the day before, we discussed then how to act when having contact with media and at panel debates. The following tips and advice were shared:

For radio interviews it is good when you already tell several people beforehand what you want to say during the interview, so that they can tell you what is unclear and you see where you are still insecure. To a radio interview, you can take as much material with you as you want to as nobody will see it, so you can – in the case that it becomes necessary – look something up or quote from your material. It is good to address the audience directly and to articulate and maybe even exaggerate the pronunciation to make it more interesting and easy to listen to. If it is not a live interview you should ask if you can listen to the version that will be sent before it is sent.

For newspaper interviews, you should make sure that everything you have said is really in the article in the end. Make sure of this by asking the reporter to send you the article before it is published. You can avoid that they skip paragraphs that are important to you and with which the meaning would be changed if they are missing. Similar to the radio interview, you should also talk with someone beforehand about what you are going to say. When you consult people about what to say or how to put it, it is, for example, good to talk to someone from your organisation who knows the topic too, as well as to someone who does not know the topic, and who will therefore have other questions than somebody who knows the subject will.

For a TV interview, the general tip about consulting others is valid as well, but during a TV interview you will most probably not have the possibility to take your notes with you and people will see it when you are nervous, therefore it is especially important to be well prepared and calm.

During a panel debate it easily happens that you come from one topic to the next, therefore the preparation done should be in a wider field. It is important to pay attention to the way of discussing practised by the others on the Panel. When you are interrupted you should make clear that you have to have your say too and continue your statement.

The responsible team member for this session offered the support to everyone, for the case she or he needs help with the preparation of a media contact.

### Information session

The information session provided the participants with an opportunity to find out more about OBESSU, IGLYO and European funding opportunities. Participants used this time mainly to find out in what ways they could become more actively involved with the organizations, and also to find out what the organizations could do for them.

In the group on funding the basics of fundraising were discussed. The importance of looking for the right institution, foundation or budget line was stressed together with the need of sticking with the formal rules given in the calls for proposals.

The group on OBESSU discussed in what way individuals and member organisations could become more active in OBESSU. In the group the structures of OBESSU were explained and also participants from none school student organisations attended the group to see if there is the possibility for a future co-operation. It is clear that a none school student organisation cannot become a member of OBESSU, but some of the organisations present showed interest in setting up a common project or getting into contact with the OBESSU member organisation in the same country.

Another group gave information about IGLYO, its structures, its activities and its members. The group discussed how the members can be more active in IGLYO and how IGLYO in the future will co-operate with school student organisations.

## **Follow-up**

Introduction of possibilities for the follow-up of the study session:

### **Participants' own follow-up:**

- Individual

The individual follow-up should definitely include that the participants brings back the information, ideas and experience she or he has gathered during the conference into her or his organisation of origin. In case of school student organisations, the representative should look through the policy and the actual work they are doing and check whether it is designed to include minorities and she or he should, if this is not the case, try to implement the work on minority issues in the work of the school student organisation in question. Furthermore each individual should act as a positive role model and be an example for others.

- In their organisation

In their organisation, every participant should share the knowledge she or he has gathered throughout the week, work with the new methods learned and use the contacts and information they have got in order to possibly improve their work. The projects developed earlier in the week should be presented to the home organisation and if possible one of them should be realised.

- With other organisations

The participants are asked to make use of the networking tools and the contacts that they gained with individuals as well as with organisations. The participants should encourage co-operation with other organisations, common projects and giving support to other organisations. The wish to co-operate on some of the projects developed during the week was clearly stated by several of the participants. One co-operation OBESSU and IGLYO hoped to encourage through the study session is a co-operation on national level of national school student organisations and minority organisations in the same country. Another follow-up activity that was wished for by participants was the support from well-established and recognised organisations (often located in the Western European) countries for organisations in Eastern Europe, which often suffer from a lack of official recognition and funding.

### **Outcome follow-up: Handbook**

During the study session, a group of participants worked on a handbook that could be used by all youth organisations working in the field of minority issues with ideas for possible projects, contacts and funding possibilities. The concept and a possible table of contents were developed during the study session and it was agreed that we would work further on it after the study session. Several participants volunteered to work on the contents and to put a draft together. We aim to look for ways to publish the handbook when more work on the content has been done.

Still at the study session, we collected statements of participants that could be used for the handbook, such as quotations similar to those in the 'Domino' booklet of the Youth Directorate.

Table of contents of the handbook:

- Introduction
- Experiences of young people from different countries
- Analysis
- Approaches for solutions
- Ways to tackle the problems
- Where you can get support
- Resources

### **IGLYO & OBESSU follow-up:**

- Report of the study session  
OBESSU and IGLYO will write the report of the study session together and send it out to all participants and make it available for interested organisations and individuals on their websites.
- Networking  
Aside from the planned on-going co-operation between the two organisations, OBESSU and IGLYO also aim to bring the different member organisations into closer contact with each other. OBESSU and IGLYO plan to get to know the other organisation even better than through the joint study session by attending more of each other's meetings.
- Support  
OBESSU and IGLYO cannot offer financial support to organisations, however, they can give advice on where to find support and provide material and experts for interested organisations.
- Further co-operation...?  
OBESSU as well as IGLYO experienced the co-operation as fruitful and useful during the preparation and the conference itself, therefore both organisations aim to keep up the good co-operation started through this common project and to develop it further.

### **Plenary discussion**

- Curricula – an efficient means to change the situation?  
This discussion was taken up again as we did not have time to discuss it longer when we dealt with it on Friday. The views mentioned were very similar to those stated earlier during the week. Several people said, that curricula as such are part of the problem of a lack of social inclusion in school and can therefore not be a tool to change it. Another group said that curricula will most probably exist at least for 20 more years in the average school in

Europe and that we therefore should try to change these no matter if we are in the and against curricula in general or not. The majority of the participants agreed that they would lobby for a change of the curricula when they come home.

- Motivation to work on the subject

Everybody agreed that the study session was very motivating to start or continue working on the subject. All have been inspired through the ideas mentioned, the methods used and by the people they had met.

- Are the developed projects useful for our organisations and are they realistic?

Most of the projects developed were seen as useful and as feasible for the organisations. A lot of the participants said that they would try to put it into practise in their organisations, but that they would have to discuss it first with the board or the general assembly of their organisation to get the approval for the work on the project or for a co-operation.

- Funding for further work

OBESSU and IGLYO clarified that they would not be able to financially support the projects that have been developed during the week or other projects that would happen as a follow-up of the study session. OBESSU and IGLYO can well give advice on where to find funding and how to approach institutions or foundations.

- WebPages

The idea to have not only the report of the study session on the websites of OBESSU and IGLYO or the participating organisations but to have an own website of the study session itself was brought up. One of the participants said that he would work on it. He mentioned the idea to have a chat room on the website for the participants of the study session and that the page could be used to exchange the work which is happening as a follow-up of this meeting.

## Evaluation

The evaluation was both formal and informal. The participants all filled out evaluation forms, and to supplement this we had an active evaluation.

The written evaluation was divided into two parts: a quantitative and a qualitative part. Below, you will find the results for each evaluated part of the programme from the quantitative part:

Participants could rate the following programme elements from 1 (least satisfactory) to 5 (most satisfactory):

Programme element	Average result
<i>Sunday</i>	
Welcome evening	4.29
<i>Monday</i>	
Introduction to the organisations	3.94
Expectations and team's approach	3.82
Explanations CoE, Youth Directorate and EYCB	3.88
Communication and creating the group	4.00
Definition of terms and intro to the theme	3.53
Home groups	4.76
Intercultural evening	4.12
<i>Tuesday</i>	
Work groups on social exclusion in school	3.88

Role play on social exclusion & discussion	4.00
Info market	4.06
<i>Wednesday</i>	
Theatre of the oppressed	4.65
SWOT analysis	3.71
Celebration of the differences	3.06
<i>Thursday</i>	
Open plenary session	3.00
Project selection & instructions for project development	4.00
Free afternoon	4.82
Dinner in town	4.65
<i>Friday</i>	
Project development	4.47
Presentations and discussion	4.18
Free evening	4.47
<i>Saturday</i>	
Networking session	4.59
<b>Overall average</b>	<b>4.09</b>

## Final plenary session and closing

During the closing plenary each participant and team member said a few words about how they felt at the end of the conference. These included...

"...I feel inspired to continue this work."

"...very happy to be here."

"...I learnt more than I expected"

"...everybody's been great."

"...a very special week"

"...not sure at the beginning, but now I can see the real benefits of this event"

"...Thanks for being nice and kind!"

"very tired..."

"...learnt how my own behaviour can contribute to social exclusion"

"I'm proud of who I am"

"I had extremely high expectations...they were all fulfilled"

"lots of fun."

"I had my doubts because we had never tried it before. This works...cooperation works,"

The general feeling on this day was very positive. A lot happened during this one week in Budapest, more than anyone expected. This co-operation between the organisations was a new initiative, and all agreed that it was a success. The farewell party in the evening was a chance to celebrate all that we had achieved, the friendships we had formed, the barriers we had broken down, the prejudices we had confronted, the co-operation we had achieved, the potential we had realised, the projects we had created. And this, we hope, is only the beginning...

## **Farewell party**

The farewell party, which was organised in the basement of the EYCB, was as mentioned above the possibility to celebrate all the achievements of the week and to say good bye to old and new friends and to have great fun.

The social committee organised 'Il postino', a game where everybody attaches a badge with a number to his or her shirt and one person – the 'postino' – goes around and delivers the mail to everyone. Through this game all the participants and team members could exchange last notes. A presentation of national traditional dances performed by the participants from the various countries took place and everybody was asked to participate in the different dances. For the rest of the night we had a disco and some food and drinks that had been prepared by the Social Committee.

## Conclusions

In many ways, this study session was something of an experiment. OBESSU and IGLYO had never worked together before, and it was not easy to say whether things would work either for the team or for the participants. The outcomes of the week, however, exceeded both organisations' as well as the team's expectations. The successful co-operation between these two organisations highlighted the usefulness, the importance as well as the need for further co-operation in this field between school student organisations and minority groups.

IGLYO and OBESSU made a very good team. For IGLYO there were a few concerns prior to the study session that IGLYO participants would be viewed differently, as 'case studies' or simply be treated differently, and that the groups wouldn't fully integrate. This was not the case. The participants formed a solid group with no visible barriers, each learning from the other's individual knowledge and experience. The team also worked well together, with no hidden agendas or contradicting priorities, which led to a very positive atmosphere at the study session and it was clear that the two organizations genuinely wanted to work together towards the same goal. Another argument for further co-operation in the future!

Many concepts and concrete project ideas came out of the session, and IGLYO and OBESSU need to continue bringing their potential and experience together to see that these ideas take shape and show effect in reality. This kind of co-operation should not only take place on European level, but also on national and local level.

The importance of preventing social exclusion at school from the very beginning on, not only by changing the curricula and the contents of lessons, but especially by working to change the entire social climate at schools, came up and was emphasised again and again. Schools should be an inclusive society in which social inclusion is practised, lived and learned.

The school system and the teaching and learning process themselves must be organised in such a way that social exclusion through the system is prevented. Openness, the provision of objective information about different groups of people, the importance of discussion and learning from and with the surrounding society should be aspects of prime importance for such an education.

Finally, we would like to say that this study session was an extra-ordinary experience for those involved. A unique learning process took place for everyone and many participants were empowered to take action and change their environment. Our best will be done to make these ideas become reality for a better future and we would like to warmly thank all the institutions and people that made this experience possible!

## List of Participants, Team Members and Speakers

### **Participants**

#### **ACCEPT**

Tudor Kovacs  
Calea Bucuresti 4, ap. 5  
2200 Brasov  
Romania

#### **AGALEV**

Jeroen Masson  
Nelderpolder 15  
9000 Gent  
Belgium  
[www.agalev.be](http://www.agalev.be)

#### **BSV**

Karsten Wenzlaff  
Im Leimen 10B  
55130 Mainz  
Germany  
[www.bundes-sv.de](http://www.bundes-sv.de)

#### **BSV**

Katja Scharkowski  
Peter Lurenz Weg 20B  
21077 Hamburg  
Germany  
[www.bundes-sv.de](http://www.bundes-sv.de)

#### **EEO**

Tommy Nielsen  
Danas Plads 15 kld.  
1915 Fredriksberg  
Denmark  
[www.eeo.dk](http://www.eeo.dk)

#### **Ganymedes**

Vladislav Michalovic  
Stavbarov 11,12  
97101 Prievidza  
Slovakia

#### **Gender-Doc M**

Maxim Anmeghichean  
Str. Cuza Voda 25/2, ap. 29  
Chisinau, MD 2072  
Moldova

#### **IADEC**

Biljana Simeonova  
bul. Partizanski odredi 17-3-11  
1000 Skopje  
Macedonia

#### **INSI**

Sigrun Sigurdardottir  
Haaleitisbraut 15  
108 Reykjavik  
Iceland  
[www.insi.is](http://www.insi.is)

#### **LAKS**

Sylvia Croese  
Strausslaan 32  
5251 HG Vlijmen  
The Netherlands  
[www.laks.nl](http://www.laks.nl)

#### **Minorities of Europe**

Rune Hauger  
Vestgrenss Studentby 11  
Trimveien 6  
0372 Oslo  
Norway  
[www.moe-online.com](http://www.moe-online.com)

#### **RMKSZ**

Oszkar Fekete  
str. Florilor 26/B/18  
4100, Miercurea-Ciuc  
Romania

#### **SKUË-LL**

Urška Sterle  
Na Rebru 9  
3000 Celje  
Slovenia

#### **SLL**

Eeva Karhula  
Kauppapuistikko 17B54  
65100 Vaasa  
Finland  
[www.lukio.fi](http://www.lukio.fi)

**SLL**

Elina Laavi  
Majavankierros 33  
04230 Kerava  
Finland  
[www.lukio.fi](http://www.lukio.fi)

**ŠOU-DOS**

Mateja Šoba  
Zdole 30  
8270 Krško  
Slovenia  
[www.dijaska.org](http://www.dijaska.org)

**UDS**

Alessandro Coppola  
Via Zamenhof 7  
20136 Milano  
Italy

**UDS**

Francesca Gruppi  
via San Massimo 36  
10123 Torino  
Italy

**USM**

Dusan Bosotov  
Vasil Gorgov 24/44  
1000 Skopje  
Macedonia

**USM**

Katerina Dudeska  
Dusko Bojkoski 4  
1000 Skopje  
Macedonia

**VSK**

Lieven Kuppens  
Hortensialaan 19  
9080 Lochristi  
Belgium  
[www.vsknet.be](http://www.vsknet.be)

**Women from Minorities**

Karen Ambrose  
39 Clancool, Bandon  
Co. Cork  
Ireland

**Youthline**

Edward Butler  
147 Redbridge  
Milton Keynes  
MK14 6DL Buckinghamshire  
United Kingdom  
[www.gayyouthmk.co.uk](http://www.gayyouthmk.co.uk)

**YSCA**

Jennifer Douglas  
530 Quail Run Road  
Aptos, California 95003  
USA

**Team Members****Council of Europe – Educational Advisor**

Yael Ohana  
European Youth Centre Strasbourg  
30, rue Pierre de Coubertin  
67000 Strasbourg  
France

**IGLYO**

Maria Foster  
90A Bankside Street  
Leeds W. Yorkshire  
LS8 5AD England

**IGLYO**

Roweena Russell  
59 Wintergarden  
Pearse str.  
Dublin 2  
Ireland

**OBESSU**

Ellen Ehmke  
Westermarkt 2-V  
1016 DK Amsterdam  
The Netherlands

**OBESSU**

Hanna Bäckmo  
Box 1085  
11479 Stockholm  
Sweden

**OBESSU**

Josiane Meier  
Westermarkt 2-V  
1016 DK Amsterdam  
The Netherlands

**OBESSU**

Maja Potoènik  
Cesta III/11 Rozna Dolina  
1000 Ljubljana  
Slovenia

***Speaker***

Henrike Eisfeld  
Krugerstraat 3  
1091 CB Amsterdam  
The Netherlands