



Final Seminar Report

Good Practice Exchange seminar on public policies combating discrimination against and promoting equality for LGBT people

The Netherlands 18 – 19 March 2010

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1. Introduction

A Good Practice Exchange seminar on public policies combating discrimination and promoting equality for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) people was hosted by the Dutch Government, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations on the 18th and 19th March 2010. The seminar was attended by members of the Non-Discrimination Governmental Expert Group (GEG), other representatives of the national authorities, and members of the Network of socio-economic experts from Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Germany, Denmark, Estonia, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, the Slovak Republic, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Belinda Pyke, Director: Equality between Men and Women, Action against Discrimination and Civil Society headed a team from the European Commission. The Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) was also represented.

The purpose of the seminar was to enable participants to learn from the experiences of public bodies in combating discrimination against and promoting equality for LGBT people in Member States other than their own. The seminar focused on good practice in the areas of mainstreaming, employment, multiple discrimination, education, multi-level governance and statistics and data collection. The debates demonstrated different levels of commitment to and ambition for achieving equality for LGBT people across the Member States. In this context the seminar served as a stimulus for some to identify possible starting points for action, while, for others it served to enable a refinement and further development of already existing practice.

Preparation for the seminar began in December 2009 when the European Commission circulated a request to the members of the Non-Discrimination Governmental Expert Group (GEG) for contributions concerning discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation and specifically in relation to good practices in public policies. The contributions of the GEG members were requested against the background of the 10th Anniversary of the adoption of the Framework Employment Directive 2000/78/EC and of the planning for the fourth Equality Summit which will focus on discrimination in employment on a number of grounds including the sexual orientation ground and will take place in November 2010.

Previously, in its Communication on 'Non-discrimination and equal opportunities: A renewed commitment', the European Commission had announced its intention to work with the Non-Discrimination Governmental Expert Group (GEG) to follow up the findings of the comparative study on homophobia and discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity in the EU Member States which was commissioned and published by the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA). GEG members had already provided comment on the FRA report at a meeting of the GEG.

The FRA report found that discrimination, homophobia and transphobia affect the lives and choices of LGBT people in all areas of social life and that the current social situation of LGBT people represents a problem for the European Union. The seminar debates highlighted a diversity of situations in the different Member States. However all Member States pointed to issues for LGBT people in the workplace, in schools and in the wider society. Physical and verbal abuse is experienced by LGBT people in these settings in all Member States. A 'tyranny of silence' was referred to where LGBT people are forced to remain invisible and where heteronormativity and homophobia define the culture and practice of organisations and the behaviour and attitudes of individuals. Even in Member States where significant progress had been made it was noted that there was no room for complacency as positive attitudes cannot be taken for granted and it is necessary to keep remaking the case for recognition and acceptance.

The meeting was opened by Renk Roborgh, Director General for Higher Education, Vocational Education, Science and Emancipation on behalf of the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and by Belinda Pyke on behalf of the European Commission. Renk Roborgh emphasised the five objectives of Dutch government policy in this area – making sexual orientation a topic for debate and dialogue in different population groups, promoting safety for LGBT people, creating an LGBT-friendly environment in schools, at work and in sports, stimulating gay-straight alliances nationally and locally, and taking an active role on these issues at a European and international level.

Belinda Pyke emphasised the difficult situation faced by LGBT people in Europe and noted that Eurobarometer figures show that 47% of Europeans believe that discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation is particularly widespread in their country. She reported that the Commission's proposals for legal steps prohibiting discrimination on four grounds including the ground of sexual orientation in areas beyond the workplace are with the Council of Ministers.

Andree Van Es, Director General for Governance and Kingdom Relations, Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, opened the proceedings on the second day of the seminar. She emphasised that effective action on LGBT issues requires legislation, institutional infrastructure, active alliances between government and civil society, and cooperation between national and local government.

Ben Baks, Senior LGBT policy expert in the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science presented the Dutch approach to combating discrimination and promoting equality for LGBT people. He detailed the policy journey made from the decriminalization of homosexual relations in 1971, to the creation of a government working group in 1982 on foot of a violent attack on a gay/lesbian rights demonstration in Amersfoort, to the introduction of equal treatment legislation in 1994 and to the introduction of legislation on registered partnerships (1998), on adoption by single parents (2000) and, finally, on civil marriage (2001). He set out the strategic approach of the Dutch government which is based on a policy plan ('Simply Gay' 2008-2011), monitoring processes, progress reporting, a LGBT focal point in the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and

policy targets. The policy targets related to the number of local authorities active on LGBT issues and to the level of Dutch public opinion claiming to accept homosexuality.

Presentations on good practice were made on mainstreaming by Karen Pinholt (Norwegian LGBT Association), on employment by Paul Overdijk (Royal TNT Post and Company Pride Platform), on education by Eunice den Hoedt (COC Netherlands and Partner in the National Gay and Straight Education Alliance), on employment and education by Niall McCutcheon (Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform Ireland) and Bilge Tekin Befrits (Ministry for Integration and Gender Equality Sweden), on multiple discrimination by Ben Slijkhuis (The National Dutch Association for the Elderly), on multi-level governance by Judith Schuijf (MOVISIE the Netherlands) and Jessica Silversmith (Amsterdam Anti-Discrimination Bureau), and on statistics and data collection by Saskia Keuzenkamp (Netherlands Institute for Social Research). Niall McCutcheon presented the results of the fifth roundtable on LGBT national government experts focal points network in Dublin on 10th March 2010.

The presentations were insightful and offered valuable guidance. The debates were lively and provided useful learning. Overall the event was viewed as a positive success and the mechanism used was deemed to have worked well.

2. Learning and guidance from the seminar

2.1 Pink Competency – Enabling organisations to engage with LGBT people

Karen Pinholt from the Norwegian LGBT Association presented a mainstreaming project implemented by her organisation in the health sector in Norway. This was an example of people mainstreaming – ensuring that LGBT people feel included in the health services and that they have a good encounter with the people working in the health sector. This work is based on the concept of ‘Pink Competency’. It is funded by the Norwegian Government. ‘Pink Competency’ is based on the provision of training to health care professionals on LGBT issues. It seeks to build the knowledge and competence of health professionals on LGBT issues. It is based on cooperation with the relevant professional organisations and networks of professionals. It is a professional rather than a political approach. It is based on the assumption that the training is being provided to people who are committed to doing a good job and who require further knowledge and competence to enable them to do so. This is an approach that could be applied in a range of sectors. It is an approach that can be done to a range of scales and therefore could be led by different sized NGOs. While NGOs can take the first steps in building ‘Pink Competency’ in public sector bodies, ultimately the national authorities have to take over the training so that it can be extended to all workers in the particular sector.

2.2 Business Case – Why companies should come out of the closet

Paul Overdijk from Royal TNT Post established the business case for companies and organisations to be proactive on LGBT issues. In a context where LGBT people have to hide their identities and are fearful of harassment, LGBT employees will underperform and will suffer stress and related illnesses. An investment in an LGBT friendly workplace enables 5% to 10% of the workforce to be more productive and more innovative. He estimated that there could be a 1% productivity gain across Europe if LGBT staff were fully integrated and comfortable at work.

There is a need for companies and organisations to ‘come out of the closet’. Companies and organisations need to be overtly LGBT friendly. This is the foundation for an LGBT friendly

workplace and is the basis from which the company or organisation will secure the resultant productivity gain. If organisations and companies 'come out of the closet' it will further serve to influence a wider societal recognition of diverse sexual identities. It could have an international contribution where companies are present in a number of Member States. Companies can export social capital.

2.3 Gay and Straight Alliances – Dealing with multiple discrimination

Gay and Straight Alliances are a key element of the strategy of the Dutch government in advancing equality for LGBT people. Gay and straight alliances bring together LGBT advocacy groups with civil society organisations, social partner organisations and national institutes. The Dutch government makes funding available to such alliances. The alliances are developed around a shared focus or interest or concern. They have, for example, been developed between employees, sports people and teachers among others. Such alliances can make LGBT issues visible in key sectors, can empower LGBT people in bringing forward their issues and can create a context for improved understanding, recognition and acceptance.

Gay and straight alliances also enable a focus on issues of multiple discrimination. Ben Slijkhuis of ANBO, the Dutch Association for the Elderly, highlighted the contribution of a gay straight alliance to improving recognition and acceptance of LGBT older people. ANBO promotes the interests of all older people. It realized that action was needed to achieve a visibility for and an inclusion of LGBT older people. ANBO played a leading role in creating a gay straight alliance of older people. Visibility is promoted through participation of older people on gay pride events and in events targeting older people, and through media and exhibitions. Empowerment is promoted through 'Pink Ambassadors' who are trained to promote the interests of older LGBT people. Advocacy is supported at national, regional and local levels.

2.4 Inside Out Approaches – Supporting LGBT people within organisations

Eunice den Hoedt, COC Netherlands, presented their work on creating a safe environment for LGBT students and teachers in secondary schools. It was difficult to secure the participation of schools despite the fact that 50% of young people say that schools are not safe places for LGBT people to come out. They developed an 'inside out' approach. The 'inside out' approach is based

on the reality that LGBT people are present in every community and within every institution. In this approach the work focuses on supporting, coaching, connecting, activating, helping and giving confidence to those LGBT people within the organisation. The approach has been particularly important in religious based schools. This 'inside out' approach has enabled a movement of student led initiatives within schools. The initiatives empower LGBT people to improve their own situation and they can be developed as gay-straight alliances.

2.5 Frontrunner organisations – Supporting and mobilising leaders in a sector

Judith Schuif, Movisie the Netherlands, introduced the concept of 'front-runner' local authorities. One of the two targets set by the Dutch Government in relation to their LGBT strategy is an increase in the number of local authorities active in the area of LGBT policy. The 'front-runner' programme involves 18 local authorities (including the four major cities). Memoranda of Understanding have been put in place between central government and these 18 local authorities. MOVISIE allocates government funding for projects in these areas. The 'front-runner' programme has put LGBT issues on the local authority agenda. It has stimulated interest from other local authorities. The numbers of projects are also rising in the selected areas. The projects have a focus on making diversity in sexual identity a topic for dialogue, combating violence, and promoting a welcoming and non-discriminatory environment in workplaces, schools and on the street.

2.6 Facts and Figures – A monitor for public opinion and the LGBT experience

Saskia Keuzenkamp, Netherlands Institute for Social Research, presented the Dutch National LGBT Monitor. The Monitor gathers data on attitudes and public opinion towards LGBT issues, the experience of LGBT people, violence and discrimination against LGBT people, sector specific monitors and local LGBT policies. The Institute launched the Monitor at the request of the government.

The Monitor can indicate the impact of policies. It enables an evaluation of policies. It can show the need for further action. It can set the policy agenda. Continuity in data collection is important if the Monitor is to fulfil these roles.

2.7 Education – A range of resources are available

Bilge Tekin Befrits, Swedish Ministry for Integration and Gender Equality, highlighted the importance of resources to assist educational establishments to understand and challenge heteronormativity so that they are better able to meet the needs of LGBT young people. Niall McCutcheon, Irish Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, emphasised the need for partnership in the preparation of resources to support a whole school approach to enable schools to meet the needs of LGBT young people.

Work has also been done in a number of other Member States to address the experience of LGBT people in schools. A range of resources are available in this field. They include:

1. The Dutch website www.gayandschool.ie which gives examples and suggestions for making schools a safe place.
2. The Flemish 'Gender in the blender' educational tool for secondary schools to sensitise young people about gender diversity and trans gender. This includes a website www.genderindeblender.be.
3. The [guidance on sexual orientation](#) issues for secondary schools published by the Department of Education and Science and the Gay and Lesbian Equality Network in Ireland.
4. The educational material called 'Homophobia in pupil's collectives' to support teachers working with students published by the Minister for Human Rights in the Czech Republic.
5. Two books and a DVD called 'What Lies Beneath the Surface?' are widely used in schools in Sweden. These were produced by a group including a broad spectrum of the Swedish educational system as well as the former Ombudsman against Sexual Orientation Discrimination and the Swedish Federation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights.

3. Seminar debates

3.1 Developing a strategic approach

The model presented by the Dutch government representatives pointed up the need for and value in a strategic approach to advancing equality for and combating discrimination against LGBT people. A number of other Member States, including Norway, the United Kingdom, Finland and Ireland, can also point to such a strategic approach.

The need for this strategic approach flows from the reality that LGBT people, as was stated in the FRA report, experience discrimination, homophobia and transphobia in all areas of social life. A strategic approach is required if policy is to adequately respond to the breadth of this challenge. The need for this strategic approach also flows from what was referred to the 'tyranny of silence', in particular where hetero-normativity and homophobia are dominant. The cultural change required to address this tyranny of silence requires a strategic and holistic approach.

The common key elements to such a strategic approach that emerged during the seminar included:

- A national plan of action with objectives, actions and targets.
- Monitoring systems to assess on a continuous basis the situation and experience of LGBT people and public opinion in relation to LGBT issues.

An institutional infrastructure within the public sector to give administrative leadership on LGBT issues, to ensure a coordination of effort across all parts of the public sector, and to secure a mainstreaming of LGBT issues into all policy units.

The value in a strategic approach is threefold. It enables a mobilisation of all policy areas to make their particular contribution to advancing equality for and combating discrimination against LGBT people. It ensures a comprehensive and sustained response to LGBT issues that addresses the full spectrum of areas where LGBT people experience these issues. Finally it offers a leadership within society which can shape a more favourable public opinion to a diversity of sexual and gender identities/expressions.

3.2 Being planned and systematic in the workplace

A range of different initiatives were discussed in relation to promoting equality for and combating discrimination against LGBT employees in the workplace. These included risk assessment and prevention plans in the workplace, LGBT employee networks, gay-straight workplace alliances, developing the knowledge and skills of employees in responding to LGBT issues in the workplace, and implementing workplace equality policies with a specific focus on LGBT employees. The monitoring system developed by the Irish Public Appointments Service to ensure there was no bias or discrimination in their recruitment processes was presented by Niall McCutcheon, Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform in Ireland. Trade unions were identified as having an important role to play in stimulating and supporting such initiatives and in providing the opportunity for gay – straight alliances.

Bilge Tekin Befrits, Ministry for Integration and Gender Equality in Sweden, highlighted the need to secure a long term competence on these issues within the workplace. This competence needs to encompass the knowledge and skills to prevent discrimination and to implement equal treatment law, to appreciate the value of diversity and to make adjustments for this diversity, and to work in a strategic long term manner that is inclusive, respectful of diversity and advances equality for LGBT people. It was pointed out that this requires a making visible of, a problematising of and a change to the norm. Just as in the wider society, a planned and systematic approach to equality for LGBT staff is required in the workplace if heteronormativity and homophobia are to be effectively eliminated.

A planned and systematic approach to workplace equality for LGBT people will involve all the various elements described during the seminar. However these elements will be applied as interlinked parts of a plan with clear objectives and targets in relation to the situation and experience of LGBT staff. In this way the focus on equality and non-discrimination for LGBT staff is mainstreamed into all elements of workplace policies, procedures and practices.

3.3 Involving LGBT Non-Governmental Organisations

LGBT NGOs emerged during the debates as key actors in advancing equality for and combating discrimination against LGBT people. NGOs were identified as initiating and implementing projects within their own communities. They were identified as partners in initiatives involving a wider range of interests and actors. They were identified as holders of key knowledge of and understanding about LGBT issues and a source of consultancy support. They were named as watchdogs and an important voice to articulate the interests of LGBT people. The role of NGOs was described in terms of showing the way and establishing how it can be done.

LGBT organisations can support the visibility and acceptance of LGBT people in the workplace. In education LGBT NGOs can be key partners in the development of guidance and resources for schools and they can be advocates that point to the 'Pink Elephant' in the room and give visibility to LGBT issues in schools. In people mainstreaming LGBT NGOs can play a key role in initiating the delivery of training necessary for 'Pink Competency' and in policy mainstreaming LGBT NGOs can be a key source of consultancy in relation to LGBT issues. In multi-level governance LGBT NGOs can be a source of expertise and support to local authorities to be active in LGBT issues and can offer a funding channel for national government funds to support this work at local authority level. LGBT NGOs are key actors within the development and operation of gay-straight alliances that address the experience and situation of groups such as older LGBT people who experience multiple discrimination.

3.4 Finding starting points

In the absence of a comprehensive strategy to advance equality for LGBT people and in contexts that are not supportive of LGBT issues it is important to find starting points around which a longer term strategy could be built. These starting points will need to be also supported by concerns other than the imperative of combating discrimination against and promoting equality for LGBT people.

Examples of starting points that could be progressed in more difficult contexts that can be identified from the seminar debates include:

- **Creating safe schools.** This is necessary for LGBT equality. However work on this theme can also be supported by the duty of care schools have in relation to their students. Work on this theme will also have a relevance in relation to a range of school based issues beyond LGBT equality.
- **Creating LGBT friendly workplaces.** This is necessary for LGBT equality. However work on this theme can also be supported by the need to comply with equal treatment legislation. It can be supported by the business case where increased productivity and innovation result from investment in LGBT friendly workplaces. Work in this area could also include and benefit other groups experiencing inequality or harassment in the workplace.
- **Mainstreaming.** People mainstreaming is necessary for LGBT equality but can also be argued for from a professional basis of people being enabled to do their job well. Policy mainstreaming is necessary for LGBT equality but can also be argued for in terms of quality policy making and effective use of scarce resources.

- **Creating LGBT friendly care services.** Again this is necessary for LGBT equality and can also be further argued for in terms of duty of care to clients and the quality of service.

3.5 Supporting small and medium enterprises

There was particular debate on the barriers for small and medium enterprises to develop as LGBT friendly workplaces. The work done and discussed in the seminar largely had a relevance to larger companies and organisations. SMEs might not have access to necessary human resource management expertise. They can be fearful of more formal approaches to issues of equality and non-discrimination. They cannot deploy the same level of resources as larger organisations to advancing workplace equality.

A number of approaches were put forward for supporting SMEs to be LGBT friendly. Chambers of Commerce, professional bodies and other business networks can be a valuable partner in developing and providing supports for this work in a manner that is relevant to SMEs. Company equality awards can provide an incentive. Specific funding programmes targeting SMEs can be put in place to make small amounts of seed money available for LGBT friendly workplace initiatives. The European Commission has developed a diversity guide for SMEs and is supporting the process whereby Diversity Charters are being developed in a number of Member States with a view to getting SME support.

3.6 Setting targets

The Dutch government model emphasised the importance of targets. Two targets were highlighted and discussed. The first related to the number of local authorities active on LGBT issues. The Dutch LGBT Monitor serves to measure progress on this target. A particular programme of support has been developed to encourage and support initiatives in this area by local authorities.

The second related to public opinion and the level of public acceptance of LGBT people. This was identified as a brave target as it is something the Dutch government does not have direct control over. Again the LGBT Monitor serves to measure progress.

The setting of targets was identified as a key part of a strategic approach to combating discrimination against and promoting equality for LGBT people.

3.7 Building a focus on Trans people

An imbalance in the focus of the contributions to the debate as between lesbian, gay and bisexual people and trans people was noted. Even in the Member States with more developed strategies in response to LGBT people it was acknowledged that little is known about the specific problems and public policy issues of trans people. Organisations of trans people have a key contribution to make in addressing this deficit.

The distinct experience and situation of trans people might be better served by a focus on LGB and T people as a means of acknowledging the distinctiveness of trans people. The value of naming trans people within gender equality strategies was highlighted. The Dutch government also links LGBT equality to gender equality.

The diversity of gender identities and gender expressions within trans people needs to be addressed and boundaries discussed. Instances where trans people and discrimination on the ground of gender identity or gender expression were specifically named in legislation were highlighted as valuable.

3.8 Roles for equality legislation and equality bodies

Equal treatment legislation was identified as a valuable foundation from which to build, drive and support a focus on LGBT issues. The prohibition on discrimination establishes a valuable standard. However it was clear in the debate that the issue of under-reporting can diminish the impact of this standard. Awareness campaigns that led to an increase in the reporting of incidents of discrimination were highlighted as was the use of local bureaux to enable easy access to expert support for those experiencing this discrimination.

The importance of extending the scope of equal treatment legislation beyond the workplace was particularly apparent in debate on the education sector. Anti-discrimination legislation covering schools was deemed to serve as a valuable challenge to hetero-normativity.

Examples of equal treatment legislation were also given that went further in supporting a more strategic approach to LGBT issues. Positive duties have been placed by the equal treatment legislation in some Member States on public bodies or on employers or on schools to be proactive in advancing equality for and preventing discrimination against LGBT people and in fostering good relations between LGBT people and the wider society. This enables and ensures a sustained and strategic approach to LGBT issues in these sectors.

Equality bodies established under equal treatment legislation were also identified as valuable actors in advancing LGBT equality issues. Tribunal findings set valuable precedents and afford

clarity as to the practices necessary for compliance. Equality bodies with a promotional role help and advise LGBT people who have experienced discrimination. These bodies have afforded a visibility to and knowledge of LGBT issues through research and media work. These bodies have served as a support for, and stimulus to, LGBT friendly good practice by employers and service providers.

3.9 The need for an external stimulus

The context of uneven progress across the Member States was seen as an argument in favour of the need to provide an external stimulus to Member States where progress was more difficult. The role of the European Commission was highlighted in this regard. This role can encompass provision of funding for particular projects. It can involve the regulations that govern other funding relationships such as the Structural Funds. This external stimulus can assist a more even spread of initiative on LGBT equality across the European Union. In naming and targeting LGBT people it can assist in breaking the tyranny of silence around LGBT people.

4. A mechanism for peer learning

4.1 A context of uneven progress across the Member States

The seminar debates revealed an uneven progress on advancing equality for LGBT people across the different Member States.

In some Member States it was stated that while the public sector is acquainted with LGBT issues only the NGO sector is taking any action on the issues. Political hostility has been evident in some Member States to LGBT people and issues. In some instances it was noted that once EU membership was secured the pressure for progress on LGBT issues disappeared.

In some Member States progress on LGBT issues has been based on separate and time limited projects. Many of these projects were advanced on the basis of EU funding. This more project based approach can be ad-hoc and difficult to sustain over the longer term. It does however offer the possibility to innovate and to kick-start more systematic approaches with a longer term potential.

In a small number of Member States a more planned and systematic approach to advancing equality for LGBT people is evident. Key to this approach is political and administrative leadership, coordination of and mainstreaming of LGBT issues into all policy areas and dedicated planning systems.

The seminar debates evidenced an appetite among the participants for this type of peer learning. The uneven progress across the Member States suggests the need for sustained peer learning to support a transfer of ambition, ideas and practices between Member States.

4.2 Peer learning in a context of uneven progress

Peer learning, it was suggested, is difficult in a context of such uneven progress. Good practice from one part of this spectrum of approaches can appear as 'science fiction' for those working at the other end of the spectrum.

Belinda Pyke, the European Commission, identified one purpose of the seminar in terms of seeking to develop this type of exchange of best practice. This is only the second such Good Practice Exchange seminar.

In a context of uneven progress it was suggested a focus on the barriers to progress and how these barriers were overcome might hold additional learning for those Member States which had made less progress on LGBT issues. Bilateral peer support and learning was also pointed to as holding potential to enable those Member States less advanced on LGBT issues to make further progress. Bilateral peer support could be organised to match Member States that face similar barriers to progress on LGBT issues but where one has managed to address or remove some of these barriers to progress.

5. Conclusions

The seminar concluding with the presentation, discussion and refining of a number of learning points from the seminar presentations and discussions. Learning points were identified for communication to the Equality Summit to be held under the Belgian Presidency in November 2010. Learning points were also identified to support ongoing work on LGBT issues by the European Commission and by the Member States.

KEY LEARNING FOR EQUALITY SUMMIT

- 5% to 10% of the workforce could be more productive and innovative in an LGBT friendly workplace.
- Equal treatment legislation plays an important role in stimulating an LGBT friendly workplace. However it is necessary to deal with under-reporting of incidents of discrimination and to explore the use of positive duties on employers as a means of preventing discrimination.
- A workplace infrastructure is necessary to drive a planned and systematic approach to creating an LGBT friendly workplace. A particular focus is required in supporting this approach in the SME sector.
- Alliances can usefully be developed that involve LGBT NGOs, trade unions, and employer organisations in gay-straight alliances.
- Schools need to be developed as safe spaces of learning for LGBT pupils.

KEY LEARNING FOR THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

- There is uneven progress across the European Union in addressing the discrimination, harassment and inequality experienced by LGBT people.
- The European Commission plays and could usefully continue to play a role as an external stimulus for a more even progress through sustaining peer learning, funding innovation and funding more long term initiatives.
- The European Commission could consider communicating itself as LGBT friendly though exploring within its competencies a means:
 1. To formulate its commitment and work and strategy in a more public manner.

2. To ensure financial and policy mechanisms serve as a lever for progress on these issues.
3. To include specific reference to trans people in the new gender equality roadmap.
4. To address the commitment to free movement of labour vis a vis the different conditions for LGBT people in different member states.
5. To develop a focus on safe schools within its work on education.

KEY LEARNING FOR MEMBER STATES

- Develop peer learning in a context of uneven progress across the Member States by using bilateral engagements and peer learning around barriers to work on LGBT issues and the resolution of barriers to making progress on these issues.
- Four starting points for new action within Member States suggest themselves:
 1. Creating safe schools.
 2. Creating LGBT friendly workplaces.
 3. People mainstreaming and policy mainstreaming.
 4. LGBT friendly care services.
- LGBT NGOs, equality bodies and gay-straight alliances need to be enabled and supported as drivers for change in this area.
- Initiatives could usefully be taken to gather data and information on the situation and experience of LGBT people. This could include surveys and research work.
- Initiatives could usefully be taken to build a deeper understanding of the needs of trans people.
- The ultimate goal of a strategic and systematic approach to LGBT equality could usefully be identified in a manner that involves action plans, monitoring, progress reporting and targets.